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Palacios: Let's stop this tit-for-tat situation. PAGE 3

2023 Job Fair kicks off this Friday. PAGE 4

COMMUNITY COMPASS CHRYSTAL MARINO

Participants of the PSS Mental Health Program's Community Compass event smile for the camera after the event last Tuesday afternoon at the Saipan World Resort in Susupe.

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Volume XXXIII, Issue No. 184
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'RB' calls for DPL secretary's removal

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Camacho

Santos

Expressing frustration with the Saipan Mayor's Office's inability to repair roads in villages because of the coral issue, Saipan Mayor Ramon "RB" Blas Camacho urged yesterday the community to join him in calling for the removal of Department of Public Lands Secretary Teresita A. Santos.

"I humbly ask the general public to please join me to protest and remove the secretary of Public Lands," said Camacho in a press briefing. He said he will protest maybe by filing a petition.

Asked for comments, Santos said she has not seen the mayor's statements calling for

See DPL on Page 4

Chamber: CNMI community continues to suffer absent China market

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
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REPORTER

Guerrero

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce said the business community, which provides jobs to a large chunk of the CNMI's population, continues to suffer absent the China tourist market.

It is no secret that the China market was one of the CNMI's largest tourism markets pre-pandemic making up 44% of the tourist population back in 2017. Now, absent this market, the Chamber says the CNMI

See CHAMBER on Page 4

CPA awarded $1.8M for airport infrastructure improvements on Saipan

The Commonwealth Ports Authority has been awarded a grant of $1.8 million under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law through the Federal Aviation Administration's Airport Terminals Program. This grant will fund an infrastructure project aimed at enhancing accessibility and convenience for travelers.

The awarded grant will be allocated to a project that encompasses several aspects of airport infrastructure on Saipan. The endeavor involves the removal and

See CPA on Page 4

USA Fanter files for another limited receivership vs IPI

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
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REPORTER

USA Fanter Corp. Ltd. has, again, moved the U.S. District Court for the NMI to grant them a limited receivership against Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC, this time for the sale of its vehicles and heavy equipment.

Yesterday, USA Fanter filed a motion for a limited

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'TOUCHBACK' COUNTDOWN

Number of days left until the "touchback" rule takes effect on Sept. 30, 2023:

16

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NMC nursing graduates Jeanica Bonachita, Huihong "May" Yang, and Jenikah Elayda have passed the NCLEX-RN.
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BUSINESS
Jack in the Box and its customers are partnering with the American Red Cross to Typhoon Mawar relief efforts.
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WORLD
Emergency workers uncovered more than 1,500 bodies in the wreckage of Libya's eastern city of Derna on Tuesday.
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SCAN ME WITH A COMPATIBLE QR READER TO KEEP UPDATED ON ALL THE LATEST NEWS.

Local

Nearly 100 take part in Mental Health's 'Community Compass' event

By CHRYSTAL MARINO
chrystal_marino@saiptribune.com
CORRESPONDENT

Seeking to better navigate CNMI youth and their families dealing with mental health, dozens of individuals from agencies under the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp., Division of Youth Services, and other government and non-profit agencies joined members of the CNMI Public School System's Office of Student and Support Services' Mental Health Program in the "Community Compass" event last Tuesday at the Saipan World Resort in Susupe.

The event began at 7:30am in the morning and concluded at 3:30pm, and during the meeting, there were networking activities, and community partner presentations, as different agencies learned the services of each program, while sharing their own, and how they may more accurately refer youth and families to the needed services and programs available.

Walter Mendez, the community project manager for Saipan under CNMI Public School Mental Health, shared that the day's event was a collaborative effort to invite mental health services for youth and related government agencies and departments to get on the same page to see the services and programs that are being offered, whether old or fairly new.

"PSS Mental Health being one of the new ones, we wanted an opportunity to hear the different services that are available for our students, and be able to utilize that as a bridging tool for our services and our programs together to serve our kids better. Being in the field of mental health and knowing where people come from first of all I think it's really important to address where is it that we want to go."

CHRYSTAL MARINO

Walter Mendez, community project manager for Saipan under CNMI Public School Mental Health, shares some remarks as the PSS Mental Health program's Community Compass concludes last Tuesday afternoon at the Saipan World Resort in Susupe.

Mendez said that activities were intentionally designed to cater to all audiences to get them to feel comfortable so that they can discuss and engage in conversations to better serve students and overall the people of the Marianas.

"We're just hoping that we'll be able to continue our connections with them so that we can move forward in having a well Marianas."

With close to 100 participants representing different agencies, Mendez remarked, "There's so many different programs that are out here to serve our kids and our community, but it takes something like this for us to all get together. Sometimes everyone gets so focused in their work and in their programs and sometimes it gets really difficult to find the space, so we wanted to create that space and make that conversation happen."

Mental Health Program Clinical Services supervisor Dr. Jennifer Maratita said, "Part of our PSS Mental Health services is really connecting with our community partners, especially when we have students who are in need of these specialized services… We can't do this alone. And with the support of our commissioner of Education, with the Board of Education, they really embraced mental health at different levels of services, even support staff, our teachers our educators."

She said Mental Health Program's Clinical Services has a staff of 20.

"We're part of an amazing team that serves Saipan, Rota, and Tinian. Community Compass is really about helping us understand what are appropriate referrals to the mental health and substance use programs that cater toward our youth and their families… what are the best practices what are the do's and don'ts, and we had amazing presentations from 13 partners from the private sector, non-profit, government agencies who just came together to share some of their insights with us so we're truly grateful for all of them that came today."

Maratita noted that topics focused on things they have been observing in CNMI youth in terms of needs for mental health.

"We've been seeing upticks in things like vaping among our youth, we've been seeing substance use in our youth, down to our little ones, and so really, think [assessing with] our partners about what we can do to pivot, address, and get ahead of the needs of our youth, from physical health, mental health, and substance use. To make sure young people are most successful not only in their academics but also their social and emotional wellness."

She then thanked all participating agencies like the Community Guidance Center and Systems of Care, Healthy Transitions and the Wellness Program under CHCC, Addictions Services Unit, Yes Program Youth Empowerment Solutions, Second Wind, Family Youth Enhancement Awareness under DYS, Special Education Services out of PSS, and the other agencies that joined them.

"We can really build these bridges to make appropriate referrals, but also these warm handoffs, having these conversations so that our families are not navigating these access points on their own… but where they have a team of providers who are in constant communication so that they don't feel isolation accessing them on their own."

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Palacios: Let's stop this tit-for-tat situation

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Gov. Arnold I. Palacios said Tuesday that he does not want to be mean to Legislative Bureau fiscal analyst Dave Demapan, but the latter was part of the budget process as he is the fiscal adviser to the Legislature.

"So of course, we are always [going to] be in the hole. Right of the bat we are in a $30-million hole already," Palacios said.

The governor discussed the deficit when asked for comments about Demapan's analysis that for the three quarters of fiscal year 2023, the CNMI government's general fund has incurred a deficit of $68.1 million, with the Department of Finance exceeding its budget by approximately $22 million and Office of the Governor by $3.4 million.

Palacios

Demapan provided his analysis and overview of the third quarter reports by Finance Secretary Tracy B. Norita to the Legislature during a recent Senate session.

Palacios said that's Demapan's analysis, clarifying they didn't budget for $13 million of the 20% to the retirees' pension benefit so of course that $13 million is contributing to that deficit.

The governor said they only budgeted $6 million to GHLI and that is costing the government $30 million.

He said they didn't put a lot of funding into a lot of expenditure items in the present budget.

Palacios said when he took office, they have $30 million to $40 million in unpaid expenses that they are still struggling to pay.

He said the government probably owes to a whole slew of vendors.

"Are we struggling? Absolutely. But we try to make allay the fears and concerns from our retirees, and allay the concerns of government employees of their insurance coverage," he said.

Palacios said he is not saying what Demapan's figures are wrong.

"Please don't paint a different picture from what the real issue is. And look at his statement because he says we're in deficit of the budgeted amount. So what was budgeted is way below what was actually expected," he said.

Palacios said at the end of the day, they need to really come together, look at the issues in front of the Commonwealth and stop this tit for tat situation.

"I'm not the only one going to solve the problem. They're part of the process. At the end of the day when the budget is passed by the Legislature, I have to take a look at it with my team and say is this something that we can move forward and there is a process," he said.

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2023 Job Fair kicks off this Friday

By CHRYSTAL MARINO
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CORRESPONDENT

The CNMI Department of Labor wants to invite the community to join the 2023 Job Fair that kicks off Friday from 9am to 3pm at the Hibiscus Hall of the Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan in Garapan.

With over 40 job opportunities on hand, Labor shared that there will be a total of 31 employers/businesses present at the event, along with nine information agencies, including some that were featured in the last DOL Skill Up Expo event, and the U.S. Army Reserve and National Guard.

"I'm excited to have so many businesses participate. We to have big companies and small companies. We have businesses represented across the island from the healthcare industry to the hospitality and even in construction fields. In addition to that we will also have our training partners present," said Labor Secretary Leila Staffler.

She shared that if a person wanted to sign up for training as well, like those offered in the expo event, they can do so.

"So, they could get an answer and have certification courses lined up on the same day," she said, noting that a person may also apply for different jobs as well.

"We really want to help people find both opportunities to help grow their financial sustainability and to be able to be more independent."

Community members are encouraged to bring their resumes, letters of recommendation, etc. and extra copies as there are no printers or photocopy machines available onsite. Also dress your best, as if attending a real interview.

"Come dressed ready to impress you know, treat this opportunity like it's a huge interview process because there are some employers who will interview on the spot that day so be ready to shine because you might have that job by the end of the day," said Staffler.

"More than anything we just really want to help the community who are looking for work because we know that there are a lot of people looking for jobs but also help the businesses who are also desperately trying to fill those vacancies that have been caused by touchback issues and find ways to address the workforce needs for the whole CNMI."

USA

From page 1

receivership against IPI to satisfy the over $200,000 judgment the casino investor has yet to pay in USA Fanter's October 2021 breach of contract suit.

Colin Thompson, who represents USA Fanter, is also asking the District Court for the NMI to appoint Clear Management Group, Ltd. as a receiver tasked with auctioning off IPI's motor vehicles and heavy equipment.

According to Thompson, in this case, an ordinary sheriff's sale (or writ of execution) would be impractical, unduly burdensome, and unlikely to satisfy the judgment therefore the appointment of Clear Management as a receiver to help USA Fanter satisfy its judgment is necessary.

On Oct. 21, 2021, USA Fanter filed a complaint against IPI alleging breach of contract.

The court ordered IPI to designate witnesses to appear at a deposition originally scheduled for July 27, 2022.

However, IPI failed to provide a witness.

Subsequently, USA Fanter moved the court to compel IPI to produce a witness and sought an order from the court directing IPI to show cause why sanctions should not be imposed.

IPI, for its part, did not oppose the motion.

Because IPI failed to oppose the motion and failed to produce a witness, the court ordered IPI to show cause why it should not be sanctioned for its failure to comply with the court's order.

On October 13, 2022, District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona Manglona found IPI in contempt and imposed sanctions including entering IPI in default and setting aside its answer

The court clerk entered IPI in default on Nov. 15, 2022.

Subsequently, USA Fanter moved the court to enter default judgment against IPI in the amount of $226,127.05.

On Nov. 29, 2022, the court heard USA Fanter's motion for default judgment and found that USA Fanter submitted sufficient evidence for the principal dollar amount of damages in the amount of $226,127.05, and based on that entered judgment in USA Fanter's favor.

On Feb. 8, 2023, USA Fanter sought a writ of execution from the court seeking to auction IPI's motor vehicles to satisfy its judgment.

DPL

From page 1

protest and her removal. She, however, pointed out that DPL Compliance Division Gregory Deleon Guerrero enforces on what's on the permit and what has been stipulated between DPL and quarry operators.

Santos also noted that Article 11 under Public Benefit is very clear as it states that "with the prior written consent of DPL, CNMI government agencies shall be exempted from paying any charges for quarry materials extracted from the quarry site operated by permittee under a valid agreement."

The secretary said Camacho has never submitted to DPL any official letter requesting for the same, although, has been acquiring quarry materials from the quarry operators.

Camacho said a lot of roads are broken because of heavy rain and that they cannot repair those now because of the coral issue with DPL.

He said it's a tradition here that if somebody dies in the family, the family gets together.

The mayor said there's a lot of inconvenience on the roadway in the residential area because many roads are not paved especially on homesteads.

He said the bottom line here is DPL leased out public property which is the quarry.

Camacho said the quarry is operated by a private entity and he wants to get those corals to repair the roads.

"So why should I pay the quarry? Why should I pay the quarry when I'm just transferring one government property to another government property?" he said.

The mayor said Santos is the custodian of public land, but she is not the owner of the land.

He said Santos must deal with the quarry operators to allow him to get those corals to repair the road.

"But she continues to throw me around. Now I get all this heat from the people. I got pressured, even the delegation [got pressured]," he said.

The mayor said he has been raising this thing to Gov. Arnold I. Palacios and to the Legislature, but no action up to now.

He said his concern is they have a lot of dialysis patients that they have to be transported by ambulance, but the emergency vehicles will not respond as fast as they could because of defective roads.

Camacho said he does not want to set a bad precedent to the community of Saipan by not paying the roads with corals.

"I want the public benefit. I'm not building an apartment. I'm not building a hotel. I'm not staging a coral on the property. I'm just taking the corals and fix the road," the mayor said.

He said he will not continue to hold back this coral issue by not serving the people.

"I was elected by the people, I'm answerable to the people," Camacho said.

He said he is not going to pay DPL's billing of $70,000 to $97,000 for the corals.

Camacho said Santos' staff told him that the quarry operator can only serve the mayor 100 cubic yards in a year, but according to him it's not enough.

"I cannot wait. I have a big responsibility. I'm elected by the people and I cannot neglect this responsibility," Camacho said.

He also noted that he just received Tuesday a letter from Santos and that the bottom of the letter was that the secretary asked him to contact her staff if he has any questions.

Camacho said it's insulting.

"I'm a mayor!" he said.

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

CPA

From page 1

replacement of 1,004 linear feet of the Asiana Place access road, which is the road that connects the Tun Herman Pan Road (Route 35) to the inter-island commuter terminal. This upgrade will enhance traffic flow and accessibility on airport premises.

In addition to road improvements, the project also includes the construction of an Americans with Disabilities Act-compliant ramp, which will enhance access to the upper bus parking area near the inter-island commuter terminal. Additionally, a new sidewalk will be constructed across the street from the upper bus parking, and a new crosswalk will connect the new sidewalk and ADA-compliant ramp. These improvements are being built to facilitate safe pedestrian movement near the inter-island commuter terminal.

Further, to address the growing demand for parking, an additional 15 parking stalls will be created. The project also incorporates drainage improvements that will improve the long-term sustainability of the enhanced infrastructure by preventing flooding and reducing erosion.

CPA has received two competitive bids for this project, and the grant has paved the way for the next phases of the procurement process, such as bid evaluation and award. Once the contract is awarded, the selected contractor will commence work on this eagerly anticipated project. ***(PR)***

CHAMBER

From page 1

struggles in its tourism resumption efforts as it is now heavily reliant on the Korea market.

"The present reality is that all of our eggs are in one basket, we do not have enough eggs to survive, and our community continues to suffer. Without additional source markets and/or handouts from the federal government, more businesses will close, U.S. worker jobs will be lost, and many will unnecessarily suffer the consequences, most especially our most vulnerable populations, our man'amko and those living in poverty," said Chamber president Joe Guerrero.

"The central problem is the absence of another sustainable tourism market, such as the China market, the structure of the NMI's tourism economy has shifted from a diversified mix of three primary source markets to only one," Guerrero added.

Because of this, the Chamber is looking to the Commonwealth Ports Authority to use its power to possibly bring back the market as well as introduce new markets to the CNMI.

"We urge [CPA] to consider engaging with the federal government to find avenues to work within the existing requirements for the resumption of air service between the NMI and China that will recognize the severe economic conditions, our unique political and geographic position, and that will allow us to join with the nation in obtaining a full resumption of tourism revenue through strategic and beneficial commercial engagements that are at the forefront of American policy in the region," he said.

"In addition, we must recognize the vulnerable position the NMI economy is presently in, with nearly all economic activity being reliant on a single source market. We support and encourage you to seek out additional markets beyond our traditional three primary source markets to bolster economic growth and CPA revenue," Guerrero added.

One of the suggestions made by the Chamber president was to include other countries in the Guam-CNMI Visa Waiver program to increase the number of tourists coming into the CNMI.

"In pursuing commercial gains of increased Chinese tourism, the NMI market can rebuild to see the return of a market that was estimated to provide 33% of total economic activity and 12.2% of government revenue prior to the pandemic. The addition of the Philippines and Vietnam to the Guam-CNMI Visa Waiver program can aid in secure unique access to the growing class of international leisure travelers from these countries, and greater emphasis on the development of existing visa-free travel allowances for Australia, New Zealand, and Singapore, can add new markets, resiliency from external economic conditions, and new revenue to support the operations of our island's port facilities," said Guerrero.

Guerrero reiterated that because the Chinese tourism market constituted 44% of the NMI's tourism arrivals prior to the pandemic and represented the second largest market in both tourism arrivals and frequency of inbound flights, when looking solely at the impact on commerce and economic activity, the loss of this market is significant.

"In total, the tourist base that supports employment, business income and tax revenue has contracted significantly by 189,000 individuals this fiscal year versus pre-pandemic levels—the loss of a total consumers that is nearly four times the size of the NMI's domestic population. Recognizing the impact that the loss of this level of commercial activity has on business revenue, government tax receipts, and airport revenue, the most beneficial course of action toward rebuilding our economy is to seek out ways to rebuild our pipelines for increasing the number of visitors to our islands," he said.

Currently, CPA is working on obtaining an exemption for the CNMI from the U.S. Department of Transportation's China Part Order 213 which restricts the number of flights coming into the US from China.

The Hotel Association of the NMI has expressed its full support of CPA's initiative to bring the China market back.

Gov. Arnold I. Palacios, on the other hand, who made the decision to pivot away from the China market due to the CNMI's geopolitical position, has not publicly expressed support for CPA's endeavor but has stated that he is feeling community pressure to bring back the China market.

However, he stated that the decision isn't unilaterally his as the return of the China market is an interest of national security.

More NMC graduates pass NCLEX

Northern Marianas College nursing graduates Jeanica Bonachita, Huihong "May" Yang, and Jenikah Elayda have joined the long list of NMC students who have passed the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses or NCLEX-RN.

Nursing graduates must pass the NCLEX-RN to be able to practice nursing in the United States. The exam tests the knowledge, skills, and abilities of nursing graduates in order to certify that they are capable of applying entry level nursing practices correctly.

"It's great to see more and more of our students pass the NCLEX-RN," NMC president Dr. Galvin Deleon Guerrero said. "We wish the best of luck to Jeanica, May, and Jenikah on their future endeavors as healthcare professionals."

NMC Nursing Department chair Rosa Aldan likewise congratulated the four on their achievements.

"On behalf of the entire nursing faculty here at the college, we are extremely proud of Jeanica, May, and Jenikah for passing such a rigorous exam," Aldan said. "I have no doubt that these three will do great things in their careers as nurses."

Bonachita, a 2023 NMC nursing graduate, pursued nursing due to her passion for helping people.

"Being able to help the people in our community is rewarding to me," Bonachita said. "I knew that as a nurse, I would have the opportunity to make a real difference in people's lives—and that's something that's always been important to me."

Bonachita emphasizes the importance of mental health while preparing for the NCLEX, "It's essential to study hard, but it's also important to remember to take mental health breaks." She added a message for NMC students planning to take the NCLEX, "You're smarter than you think you are, and just remember to trust your instincts and stick with your first answer; don't second guess yourself!"

Bonachita is now working at CHCC as a registered nurse in the Medical-Surgical Unit.

Bonachita

Elayda

Yang

Having graduated this year with a nursing degree, Huihong "May" Yang, pursued the medical sector to make a meaningful difference in people's lives.

"My motivation for pursuing a nursing degree stems from my strong desire to impact my family life and others positively," Yang said.

A major factor that contributed to Yang's passing of the exam was her support system, "My professors, classmates, and my family played a significant role in my nursing school. NMC's Nursing Program equipped me with knowledge and skills that contributed to me passing the NCLEX."

Yang is now a registered nurse at CHCC's Medical-Surgical Unit.

Jenika Elayda, a classmate of both Bonachita and Yang, highlights the NMC Nursing Program's curriculum in her preparation of the exam.

"The nursing instructors in the NMC Nursing Program had garnered a comprehensive curriculum that helped us create a strong foundation in preparing for the NCLEX-RN," Elayda said.

What motivated Elayda in pursuing nursing would be her passion for helping others and making a positive impact on people's lives.

"I learned within myself throughout my time in the nursing program that I find it very fulfilling to be caring for people, especially those in need," Elayda said. "It feels amazing having to choose a profession that could greatly impact someone's life."

Elayda is planning to apply at CHCC to work as a registered nurse.

For more information about NMC's nursing program, email NMC Nursing Department chair Rosa T. Aldan at rosa.aldan@marianas.edu or call (670) 237-6744. ***(PR)***

NMC

BETTER COMMUNICATION

Coordinated by Northern Marianas College's Community Development Institute, the CNMI Public Assistance Office recently began the GovComms: Effective Communication for Government Employees Training Initiative, a four-week program designed to improve communication skills, teamwork, and productivity in the workplace. Other government agencies who are looking for professional development activities for their team are asked to contact the Community Development Institute at cdi@marianas.edu.

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QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS ITB CAN BE MADE TO THE DEPARMENT OF COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS BY SEPTEMBER 18, 2023, TO MR. FRANCISCO M. RABAULIMAN VIA EMAIL AT frank.rabauliman@gov.mp

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ FRANCISCO M. RABAULIMAN
ACTING SECRETARY, DCCA

/S/ BRIEN S. NICHOLAS JR.
ACTING DIRECTOR, PS

BLACK MICRO CORPORATION

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JKPL announces Great Stories Club registration open for teens

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Joeten-Kiyu Public Library's Great Stories Club is a free book club for teens ages 13-18 years of age.

Joeten-Kiyu Public Library in partnership with the American Library Association announces the ongoing registration for the Great Stories Club that started last Friday, Sep. 9, 2023. The first Great Stories Club theme is "Deeper than Our Skins: The Present Is a Conversation with the Past." The Great Stories Book Club is a reading and discussion program for underserved teens.

The books—curated for the theme "Deeper than Our Skins: The Present Is a Conversation with the Past"—will include "Between the World and Me" by Ta-Nehisi Coates; "The Revolution of Evelyn Serrano" by Sonia Manzano; "Dreaming in Indian: Contemporary Native American Voices," edited by Lisa Charleyboy and Mary Beth Leatherdale; "The Shadow Hero" by Gene Luen Yang, illustrated by Sonny Liew; and "Mother of the Sea" by Zetta Elliott. The titles were selected to inspire young people—especially those facing difficult circumstances or challenges—to consider "big questions" about the world around them and their place in it.

Great Stories Club is a free book club for teens ages 13-18 years of age. Gatherings for the Great Stories Club will meet twice a month at the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library, and each month we discuss a different book. At the end of the book club, participants will be able to keep the book! Sign up online (https://forms.gle/hEmkseFiYrivT3Zn6) and join for a time of food, fun, and books. First meeting discussion starts Saturday, Sept. 23, 2023 at 12pm. Seats are limited.

You will receive a confirmation call upon acceptance into the Great Stories Book Club. Registration will close once all slots are complete. Schedule is subject to change. The next book club will meet in October. For more information or to ask questions, call the library at 235-READ and ask for Shianalyn, or email her at shianalynlizama@gmail.com.

Please enjoy the public library's free resources by visiting our website at www.cnmilib.org like/follow JKPL's Facebook page @joetenkiyupubliclibrary, Instagram @joetenkiyupubliclibrary, Tik Tok @jkpl670, Twitter @JoetenKiyu, and Youtube: joeten kiyu public library or visit our website www.cnmilib.org to see the progress and programs JKPL has worked so hard to offer for our community. For more information regarding any of our activities, please contact JKPL @670-235-7322/7318.

JKPL welcomes and encourages businesses to please consider donating Educational Tax Credit. Pursuant to NMI Public Law 15-120, the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library is able to receive cash contributions under Educational Tax Credit (ETC). Please make checks payable to: CNMI Treasury. For MUNIS payments, to the Friends of the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library MUNIS Vendor ID#100404.

JKPL's hours of operation are as follows: Open Tuesday to Thursday 9am-5pm, Friday 9am-6pm, and Saturday 10am-4pm. Closed Sundays, Mondays, Austerity Saturdays, and holidays. Closed for JKPL Austerity on the following Saturdays: Sept. 16 and 30, 2023.

JKPL is an equal opportunity provider and employer. ***(PR)***

mina
Mariana Islands Nature Alliance

Request for Proposals (RFP)
for Marine Debris Salvage and Removal Project on Tinian and Saipan, CNMI - Issued by Mariana Islands Nature Alliance (MINA)

Project Overview: The Mariana Islands Nature Alliance (MINA) is inviting qualified individuals, organizations, and companies to submit proposals for a marine debris salvage and removal project on the islands of Tinian and Saipan in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). MINA aims to address the critical issue of typhoon generated marine debris, promote environmental sustainability, and preserve the natural beauty of the islands.

Project Objectives: The primary objectives of this project are as follows:

1. Effectively remove typhoon marine debris covering the area from Tinian Harbor to Tachogna Beach.
2. Transport debris from salvage sites on Tinian and Saipan to Saipan recycling centers or landfill, whichever is appropriate.
3. Collaborate with local stakeholders, government agencies, and community groups to ensure the success of the project and foster a sense of environmental stewardship.

Scope of Work: The selected proponent will be responsible for the following tasks:

1. Develop a detailed salvage and removal plan outlining methodologies, equipment, and personnel requirements.
2. Execute the removal of marine debris with a strong emphasis on minimizing environmental impact.
3. Implement sorting and categorization of collected debris for recycling, appropriate disposal, and potential utilization in educational and creative initiatives.
4. Provide transport of debris from salvage sites to Saipan and either to a recycling center or the Saipan landfill thereafter. In addition, the contractor must provide transport of MINA equipment used in Tinian back to Saipan.
5. Ensure strict adherence to all relevant permit conditions provided by MINA.
6. Organize and execute community engagement events, workshops, and outreach initiatives to raise awareness about marine debris and promote behavioral change.
7. Provide regular progress updates and comprehensive reports, including data on the volume/weight and types of debris removed, to MINA.

NOTE For a detailed Scope of Work please email David Benavente, MINA Project Manager at dbenavente.mina@gmail.com

Proposal Requirements: Interested parties are requested to submit comprehensive proposals containing the following elements:

1. Brief introduction of the proponent, highlighting relevant experience in marine debris removal projects and related qualifications.
2. Detailed project plan encompassing approaches, techniques, equipment, and a project timeline for debris removal and disposal.
3. Explanation of safety protocols, environmental safeguards, and mitigation measures to ensure project compliance.
4. Comprehensive budget detailing itemized costs for personnel, equipment, transportation, disposal, and community engagement activities.
5. Overview of previous projects similar in nature, including references from clients or partners.

Submission Deadline and Contact Information: Proposals must be submitted electronically to minaoutreach@gmail.com no later than 9/21/2023. Proposals received after this deadline will not be considered. For inquiries and clarifications, please email David Benavente or Becky Furey at dbenavente.mina@gmail.com, beckyfurey.mina@gmail.com

Evaluation and Selection: Proposals will undergo a thorough evaluation based on the proponent's experience, proposed methodologies, budget, and capability to fulfill the project's objectives. MINA reserves the right to accept or reject any proposal and to award the contract to the most qualified and suitable proponent.

Contractual Information: The chosen proponent will be required to enter into a formal contract with MINA, outlining project terms, payment structure, reporting obligations, and deliverables.

Thank you for your interest and consideration in submitting your proposal and your commitment to preserving the natural resources of Tinian and Saipan.

Sincerely,

Roberta Guerrero
Executive Director
Mariana Islands Nature Alliance (MINA)
minaoutreach@gmail.com
(670) 233 Reef (7333)

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ATTORNEY FOR Petitioner

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

In the Matter of the Estate of ALEXANDER PANGELINAN SABLAN, Deceased.] CIVIL ACTION NO. 23-0168

NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation has filed a Petition for Letters of Administration upon the Estate of Alexander Pangelinan Sablan, deceased; and that the said Petition will be heard by the Court on **THURSDAY, October 19, 2023 at the hour of 10:00 a.m.** of the said day.

NOTICE is also given to all heirs of and persons having claims against the Estate of Alexander Pangelinan Sablan, deceased, and to all persons claiming an interest in said Estate, that they shall file such claims with the Clerk of this Court within sixty (60) days from the first publication of this Notice. Copies of such claims should be provided to Michael A. White, Esq., The Law Offices of Michael A. White, LLC, P.O. Box 5222 CHRB, Saipan, MP 96950, Attorney for Petitioner. All claims not so filed shall be forever barred.

DATED: 08 September 2023

/s/
JOSEPH N. CAMACHO, Associate Judge

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ATTORNEY FOR Petitioner

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

In the Matter of the Estate of ROSALIA SELEPEO BORJA, Deceased.] CIVIL ACTION NO. 23-0169

NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation has filed a Petition for Letters of Administration upon the Estate of Rosalia Selepeo Borja, deceased; and that the said Petition will be heard by the Court on **THURSDAY, October 19, 2023 at the hour of 10:00 a.m.** of the said day.

NOTICE is also given to all heirs of and persons having claims against the Estate of Rosalia Selepeo Borja, deceased, and to all persons claiming an interest in said Estate, that they shall file such claims with the Clerk of this Court within sixty (60) days from the first publication of this Notice. Copies of such claims should be provided to Michael A. White, Esq., The Law Offices of Michael A. White, LLC, P.O. Box 5222 CHRB, Saipan, MP 96950, Attorney for Petitioner. All claims not so filed shall be forever barred.

DATED: 08 September 2023

/s/
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IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

In the Matter of the Estate of JOSEPHINE TORRES CABRERA HIDEOS, Deceased.] CIVIL ACTION NO. 23-0170

NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation has filed a Petition for Letters of Administration upon the Estate of Josephine Torres Cabrera Hideos, deceased; and that the said Petition will be heard by the Court on **THURSDAY, October 19, 2023 at the hour of 10:00 a.m.** of the said day.

NOTICE is also given to all heirs of and persons having claims against the Estate of Josephine Torres Cabrera Hideos, deceased, and to all persons claiming an interest in said Estate, that they shall file such claims with the Clerk of this Court within sixty (60) days from the first publication of this Notice. Copies of such claims should be provided to Michael A. White, Esq., The Law Offices of Michael A. White, LLC, P.O. Box 5222 CHRB, Saipan, MP 96950, Attorney for Petitioner. All claims not so filed shall be forever barred.

DATED: 08 September 2023

/s/
JOSEPH N. CAMACHO, Associate Judge

UOG

Agriculture students from the University of Guam and National Pingtung University of Science & Technology in Taiwan participated this summer in the first Smart Agriculture Technology & Culture Experience Study Abroad Program. The participating students were, standing from left, Nuo-Ya Lou; Tzu-Yi Li; Hua-En Zhang; Zhen-Wei Huang; Celia Pangelinan; Dian-Yu Huang; Arantxa Andres; I Li Hua; Maegan Delfin; Ashley Yip; front row, from left, Scott Davis Jr.; and Kaelan Arciaga.

Scholarships help send UOG students to Taiwan

A ceremony on Aug. 25 recognized 10 University of Guam agriculture students who received scholarships to participate in a two-week Smart Agriculture Technology & Culture Experience Study Abroad Program in Taiwan this summer. The students each received $1,000 from the J. Yang & Family Foundation of California through the UOG Endowment Foundation.

The students travelled to Taiwan in July and learned about smart agriculture technology at the National Pingtung University of Sciences & Technology and about the culture and language of Taiwan from the Taiwan Huayu Bilingual Exchanges of Selected Talent Program at National Taiwan Normal University—two new sister colleges of UOG's College of Natural & Applied Sciences.

Six National Pingtung University students also received scholarships and spent the month of August in Guam touring local farms and UOG's agricultural experiment stations, learning from faculty, and also sharing how their school is incorporating virtual reality technology into the curriculum.

"These scholars have not only embarked on an academic expedition, but they have also immersed themselves in an enriching cultural exchange," said UOG President Anita Borja Enriquez. "They have explored new territories, both geographical and intellectual, and have returned with a wealth of experiences that will shape their futures in ways we can only begin to fathom."

Their scholarships are part of a $600,000 donation that is being made over three years by the foundation of Taiwanese-American entrepreneur Jackson Yang to fund the newly established Asia Pacific Studies Center project under the University of Guam's Office of the President. Yang is the founder and CEO of a robust housewares and storage systems manufacturing company called Seville Classics based in California, chairman of First General Bank, and a national policy adviser to the president of Taiwan.

The donation will support two more years' worth of scholarships for the Smart Agriculture Technology & Culture Experience Study Abroad Program as well as two fellowships for graduate students from Taiwan to study at UOG each year and two visiting faculty from Taiwan to UOG each year engaging in educational and cultural exchange.

Additionally, the donation will fund two other upcoming activities of the Asia Pacific Studies Center and scholarships for students to participate in them: an Austronesian International Arts Exhibition taking place in Guam in October and the International Conference on Sustainability Culture taking place in Taiwan in November.

For more information on the Guam-Taiwan projects mentioned or the next study abroad experience, please email Dr. Kuan-Ju Chen at chenkj@triton.uog.edu. ***(PR)***

UOG

Jackson Yang, center, founder and CEO of California-based Seville Classics, a national policy adviser to the president of Taiwan, and president of J. Yang & Family Foundation, welcomed representatives of the University of Guam's Asia Pacific Studies Center on July 27, 2022, at his company headquarters in Torrance, Calif. From left, Dr. Jeng-Hung Liu, associate liaison of the Asia Pacific Universities Consortium and assistant professor of animal science, UOG; Dr. Kuan-Ju Chen, senior liaison of the Asia Pacific Universities Consortium and associate professor of agricultural economics, UOG; Rebecca Lan, director of the Education Division of the Taipei Economic & Cultural Office in Los Angeles; Yang; Dr. Anita Borja Enriquez, president, UOG; Julie Yang, vice president, J. Yang & Family Foundation; and Wilson Wang, president, Taiwan Hotel & Motel Association of Southern California.

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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EDITORIAL

Age is not the biggest problem for America's senior politicians. It's partisanship

Despite all the quiet chatter about America's aging political leadership, a slow but growing burn as we move into a new political season, it is our view that age is a crude and mostly worthless determination of fitness for office. Older people typically come with vast amounts of experience, a better sense of their own selves and a more measured view on life.

Competence is what matters.

The reality, of course, is that people age differently: There are 100-year-olds more capable than 80-year-olds, and 90-year-olds with minds more usually associated with those who are decades younger. And, it must be said, there are those for whom aging proceeds so rapidly, they would be incapable of handling a demanding job such as president of the United States when many of their peers would have no such difficulty.

America, of course, cannot have this necessary conversation because it is so riven by partisanship.

Over the last few weeks, the age issue has repeatedly come up in relation to President Joe Biden, who is 80 years old and likely running for a second term; presidential candidate Donald J. Trump (77), who is running again, legal issues notwithstanding; Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (81); and former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (83), who recently said she will run for reelection.

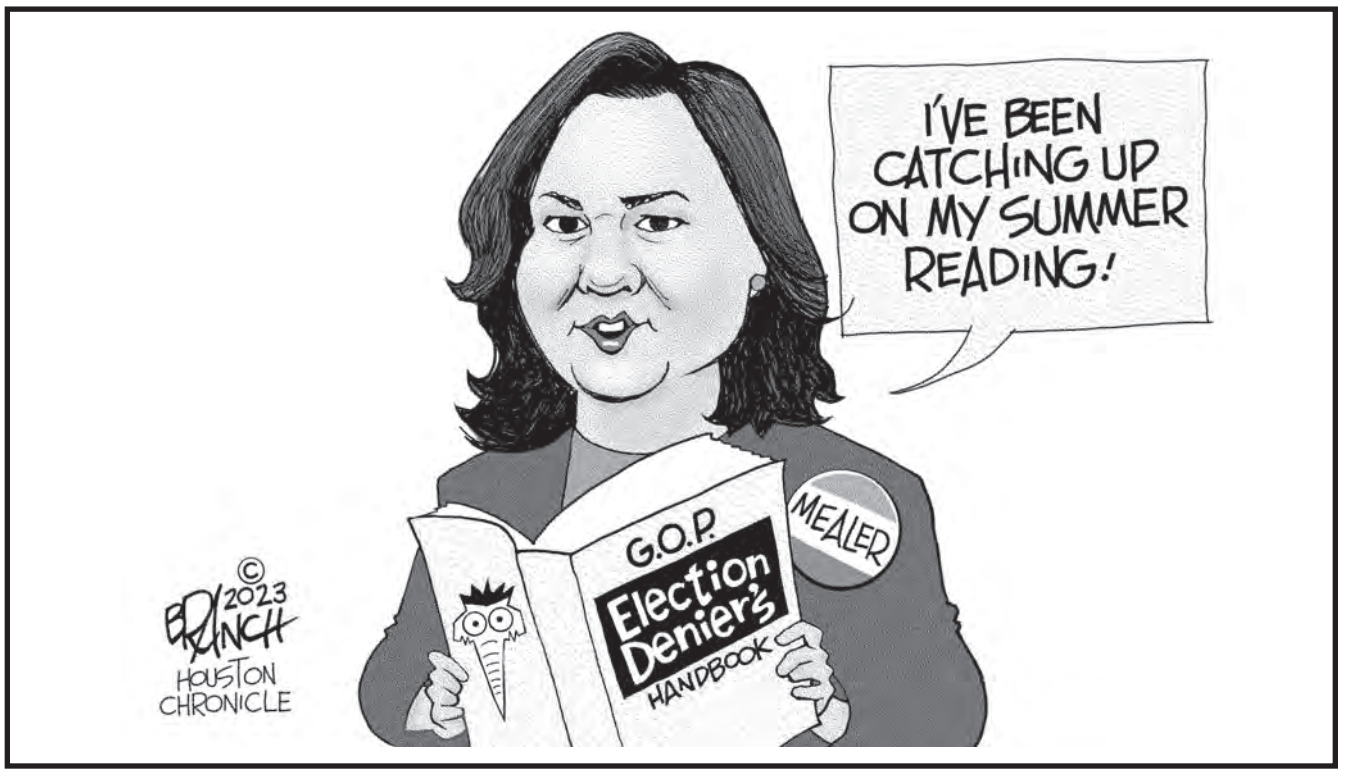
We've read one piece after another focusing on the alleged incompetence of a writer's ideological opponent, conveniently ignoring a similar problem in the writer's own camp. Biden recently said something supportive of McConnell, but with that rare exception, the Democrats and Republicans have settled into a iron-clad but still dysfunctional strategy: Whatever is done about someone who does not appear to be fit for office any longer, it must be done without political risk.

And there's the problem. A Democrat does not appear able to look honestly at the strengths and weaknesses of McConnell, anymore than a Republican can look fairly at the issues with Biden. There is no nonpartisan body parsing these delicate matters of mortality. Oldsters on both sides of the aisles have become the equivalent of nuclear weapons stored in a bunker in the spirit of mutually assured destruction.

And, as a result, you get the absurd situation in which Republican political strategies lament, without irony, how the issues with McConnell have blunted their planned attack strategy involving Biden's age, as if two completely different men in completely different jobs with completely different personalities and health profiles are simply equivalencies, rather than human beings in all their messiness and glory.

The partisan media have only inflamed this problem, whether that means scrutinizing whether Biden really fell asleep at a meeting (deep REMs?) or was merely resting his eyes, or end-

See AGE on Page 9



Voters think Biden's too old to run again. Can he persuade them that they're wrong?

By DOYLE MCMANUS
Los Angeles Times

Doyle McManus is a columnist for the Los Angeles Times.

Voters in both major parties think President Joe Biden is too old to run for reelection. The poll numbers are piling up—and they're striking.

An Associated Press-NORC survey released late last month indicated that 77% of adults in the U.S. believe Biden is too old to be effective for another term. That includes 69% of Democrats.

A Wall Street Journal survey yielded similar results, plus this stinging finding: Only 36% of voters said they consider Biden "mentally up for the job."

"You can see, even from the beginning of his presidency until now, there's definitely been some decline—and that's worrisome," a Pennsylvania Democrat named Elena said in a focus group for "PBS NewsHour" last month. (Voters participated on the condition that their full identities would not be disclosed.)

Sarah Longwell, the anti-Trump Republican strategist who conducted the session, said Democratic voters raise the issue of Biden's age without being prompted.

"Age is the first thing they talk about," she said.

"I was a little surprised at how down on Biden they were," she added. "We asked them to give him a letter grade, and most were in the low Bs and Cs."

At this early stage in a presidential campaign, poll numbers should be taken with a grain of salt, especially those that purport to forecast an election that's 14 months away.

But the bipartisan doubts about Biden are too lopsided to dismiss.

It may seem unfair that many voters consider Biden too old at 80, but give former President Donald Trump something of a pass at 77. In the Wall Street Journal poll, 46% said they considered Trump mentally fit for the presidency — better than Biden, but still less than impressive.

One explanation may be that Trump presents an image of manic vigor, while Biden sometimes appears hesitant and fragile.

"Even though he's a bully, [Trump] doesn't falter, he doesn't mumble, he doesn't fall off the steps," another Democrat in the focus group said. "Biden does."

Peel back the voters' views, though, and it's not just Biden's stiff gait or sometimes-jumbled speech that's at issue.

Voters' core concern remains the economy, on which most give the president low marks.

In the AP-NORC poll, only 36% of respondents said they approve of Biden's economic leadership. That includes 65% of Democrats—a relatively low showing among the president's base.

At first glance, those numbers seem paradoxical. The economy is growing at a healthy clip, unemployment is low, and inflation, which peaked last year at 9%, has slowed to about 4%.

But in interviews and focus groups, voters don't cite the overall rate of inflation; they complain about the stubbornly high price of housing, groceries and gasoline.

"Voters aren't feeling the benefits of the economy," Longwell said. "They think Biden is too old, and they don't think he's doing a good job."

Despite voters' qualms, it doesn't appear that any leading Democrat will challenge the president for the nomination—and there's no sign that Biden has considered stepping down.

A new book on his presidency, "The Last Politician" by Franklin Foer of the Atlantic magazine, describes Biden as confident that he can win again.

Foer writes that Biden's 53-year political career has taught him a lesson: "Just after he is dismissed as past his prime … he pulls off his greatest successes."

What the president wants most is to "prove the establishment naysayers wrong," Foer concluded.

Biden did that in 2020, when he won the Democratic nomination and defeated Trump, and again in 2022, when he led Democrats to unexpectedly good results in the midterm election.

Can he do it again in 2024, when he'll be just shy of 82 on election day?

He's already made a start.

After initially ducking questions about his age—"It doesn't register with me," he claimed this spring—he quickly turned to joking about it.

"You say I'm ancient? I say I'm wise," he said just days later.

His staff has quietly taken steps to protect his health. They are more careful to make sure there are no obstacles in his path, like the sandbag he tripped over at the Air Force Academy in June.

His schedule is a little lighter, with fewer evening events—a step Ronald Reagan also took as a president in his 70s.

But Biden still relishes his role as diplomat in chief, and he seems intent on proving he has the stamina for it. Last week he set out on a grueling round-the-world trip with stops in India and Vietnam, jammed into just four days.

But his foreign travel won't assuage voters' main concerns.

There are two factors that could still help Biden win a second term.

One is the economy: Inflation appears to be ebbing. By next year, if prices level off, more voters might give Biden credit for the recovery.

The other is the likely nomination of Trump, whose standing in the polls is almost equally low.

When Longwell asked the Democrats in her focus group how they would vote if their choice came down to Biden or Trump, almost every hand shot up for Biden.

"If Trump is the nominee, they'll get more enthusiastic," she said. "Not necessarily for Biden, but to keep Trump away from the presidency."

Biden can't make voters forget that he's 80 years old and counting. But he may be able to change the subject and prove the naysayers wrong one last time.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

General education classes strengthen democracy

By COLLEEN E. WYNN AND ELIZABETH ZIFF
Progressive Perspectives

Colleen E. Wynn, Ph.D., and Elizabeth Ziff, Ph.D., are assistant professors of sociology and co-directors of the Community Research Center at the University of Indianapolis. This column was produced for Progressive Perspectives, a project of The Progressive magazine, and distributed by Tribune News Service.

Higher education faces a new wave of attacks from Republican politicians. In 2022, legislators in 36 states introduced 137 "educational gag order" bills, a 250% increase from 2021. Further, the American Association of University Professors recently documented 57 bills in 23 states aimed at controlling what faculty can teach. While not all bills target general education courses, specifically, many target its content, such as readings on race, gender and sexuality. These attempts at censorship work because most people have a fundamental misunderstanding of the importance of general education.

General education's purpose is to provide students with a well-rounded education spanning topics such as math, science, English, social sciences and the arts. It also teaches students critical thinking, written and oral communication, project management and more.

As faculty who teach general education courses every semester, we know that they're much more than learning facts and figures and how to prepare for a job. These classes allow students to learn about the connections between professional fields, how systems and structures fit together and the ways that all of these areas fit into a broader society.

Exposure to a variety of disciplines, ideas and people enriches individual lives as well as the health of society as a whole. For example, one of us recently taught a business major who said that because of her general education courses, she had found a passion for piano and for serving others. She will continue volunteering and is enrolling in an additional piano course next semester.

Cutting general education also hampers students' chances of success and their adaptability in the workplace. While many think that the primary goal of higher education is to receive a degree in one's chosen field, the reality is that the workplace is not necessarily linear. The majority of college graduates say they are working in a field that is not related to their degree. What's more, this is not new, as 10 years ago another study found that 73% of college graduates work in fields that are entirely unrelated to what they studied in college. And it is estimated that workers will have approximately 12 different jobs in their lifetimes.

So, for most of our students, choosing a college major is not the same as choosing a career. The breadth of disciplines in the general education curriculum ensures that students are exposed to multiple schools of thought, transferable skills, and complex and creative thinking.

The benefits of general education extend beyond the effect on individual lives. Researchers at Georgetown University found that higher education can mitigate authoritarian tendencies by promoting independent thought, respect for diversity and the ability to assess evidence.

To be sure, college costs have increased dramatically in recent decades. The average total cost of attendance at public and private universities went up by around more than two-and-a-half times between 1979-1980 and 2021-2022. It is understandable that students and their families might want to minimize the number of courses they take while in college and complete their degrees more quickly.

Colleges and universities, and in turn, families, need more government support to make college more affordable and accessible. Reducing general education requirements may help reduce the number of courses a student takes, but it also limits their exposure to the skills necessary for success after graduation.

We must all be wary of the increasing attacks on higher education and the general education curriculum. These educational "gag order" bills impede the growth of individuals, society and democracy. General education courses provide the expansive tool kit students need to be successful in the ever-changing workplace. Removing general education requirements hurts students in the long term. Employers value college degrees because they teach a breadth of skills and prepare students for the workplace.

We must push back when legislation infringes on learning opportunities. Politicians need to stay out of the classroom. Students should demand their education not be censored. And faculty must take seriously their responsibility as educators and ensure that they provide a well-rounded and comprehensive education to all students.

What if the United States is not ripped apart?

By DAVE ANDERSON
The Fulcrum

Dave Anderson edited "Leveraging: A Political, Economic and Societal Framework" (Springer, 2014), has taught at five universities and ran for the Democratic nomination for a Maryland congressional seat in 2016.

What if the United States is not being ripped apart? Before there can be growth, whether you are thinking about the life of an individual, a sports team, a muscle or an entire nation, there has to be tension, conflict, and pain. Otherwise, things are calm, stable, moving along smoothly.

The conventional wisdom is that our country is polarized, progressives at war with conservatives, enraged advocates on opposite sides of the fence on matters ranging from guns and abortion to immigration, to teaching gender identity in middle school, and religious freedom and the rights of the LGBTQ community to purchase products and services from companies of their choice. Moreover, Washington, D.C. is regarded as the microcosm of the enraged citizens fighting in the North, the South, the Midwest, and the West. The political system itself is regarded as broken due to gerrymandering, distrust of politicians, distrust of the judicial system, and the corrupt role money plays in politics.

Although Washington, D.C., is the epitome of polarization, the country actually is not polarized. Gallup reports in almost every month in the past year that between 40% and 44% of American voters identify as independents. Sure, 60% of the country is polarized, and half of that 60% is very polarized. But 60% of the country is not the country.

On some of the major policy areas that the polarization narrative features, abortion and guns, majorities of over 60% of the voters are on the same side: There is no close tug of war among the people on the question of whether Roe v. Wade should have been overturned (solid majority says no) or whether the country needs stronger regulation of guns (solid majority says yes), including background checks for anyone who wants to purchase a gun. How could the country be polarized if 40 to 44 American voters out of 100 do not regard themselves as members of the political parties which MSNBC and Fox News tell us represent the American people and are at war with each other?

Now imagine a possible though admittedly not probable future: What if Donald Trump, wrestling with four indictments, does not make it to the Republican nomination? What if Republican voters pick former South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley? Or what if they pick someone out of the purple like swing state Virginia Gov. Glenn Youngkin as their nominee?

And what if there is a surge of independents who back the centrist ticket for president and vice president that No Labels has threatened to run (though not fund) if the "environment" is right? Democratic West Virginia Sen. Joe Manchin and former Republican Utah Gov. Jon Huntsman have been floated as possible candidates. And what if a bold centrist ticket as opposed to a moderate centrist No Labels ticket emerges that draws the support of many independents?

If Trump is sidelined for, say, Haley, and Manchin and Huntsman have the No Labels backing, a bold centrist ticket emerges, and President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris stay in the race and possibly they become bold centrists, then the leading candidates in the race for president would all be speaking from a broadly sensible point of view. The general election would be absent of hatred, viciousness, craziness, and unconstitutional proposals.

Since the rise of information technology, especially the internet and social media, things change faster than ever before. We therefore should not be too surprised if the country takes a turn in a direction away from the pathetic place where it is today.

The odds do not favor this development, but it cannot be assumed that it will not come about.

With about 100 million American adults who do not think of themselves as Democrats and Republicans, and with a recognizable number of dissenters in both parties in Washington, we must admit that the future is open. Trump is not destined to serve a second term in the White House, and he may end up serving time in a federal prison.

The anxiety, the anguish, the fighting, the meanness that we see daily in the news may be the body politic articulating what the extremists and purists believe and feel but not what 40% -- even 50% -- of American adults believe and feel. At the heart of the American experience there is decency, there is respect for the law, there is love of family, and there is hope for the future. We may yet see the independents, the moderates, and the centrists take control of our destiny.

AGE

From page 8

lessly sharing the footage of McConnell appearing to freeze at a microphone. On Friday, Politico published a story with the headline "The Macabre Scene as Mitch McConnell Returns to the Senate," as if what has been going on with McConnell is more akin to a Halloween freakshow than something many loving families know all too well.

Incredibly, the news site tastelessly treats McConnell's return to work as a drama-filled event. "There was a palpable sense of uncertainty among the press gaggle," Politico reported. "Would McConnell face questions from the gathered reporters? Would he answer questions about his physical health and mental capacity? Would we—possibly, just possibly—witness another freeze?"

It's about as tacky, and as partisan, as we could imagine.

Democrats also see much of Trump's scorched-earth bluster as age-related (so do we, for that matter), even if his supporters don't care. Meanwhile, Republicans try to paint Biden's signs of aging as turning him into a mere puppet of the so-called deep state, when that clearly is not true. Of course, denying that those physical signs are visible isn't speaking the truth, either.

And there's another problem. Electing political leadership means voters have to attempt to predict the future, too. You could believe that Biden is now perfectly competent to be president (our view) and not want to risk that changing in another four years.

In an ideal world, these politicians would be able to judge their own situations and exit the stage at the perfect moment, before whispers about incompetence emerge. From a reputational point of view, this would appear to have been a great option for Biden, who could have declared many victories, but he has rejected the option. And the decision was his to make.

In the federal judiciary, the issue of elderly judges who aren't suited anymore for the bench but still are hanging on generally is handled by a trusted colleague. Often, the chief judge of a district will suggest a lunch between two old friends, one of whom will then gently suggest that now might be the moment. That happens all the time.

But politicians tend to be more immovable, experience shows. They're mostly fierce warriors, always ready for one more battle, and, being accustomed to attacks from the other side, they tend to view questions of mental competence as just another partisan thrust to be repelled. Often, they're right. But not always.

We really do need a better system to judge these things with compassion, awareness of the value of the experience and a clear-eyed view of the demands of an office stretching years into the future.

In its absence, we could do with more senior politicians designating someone they trust to tell them when they have to go. They're not so good at seeing it themselves.

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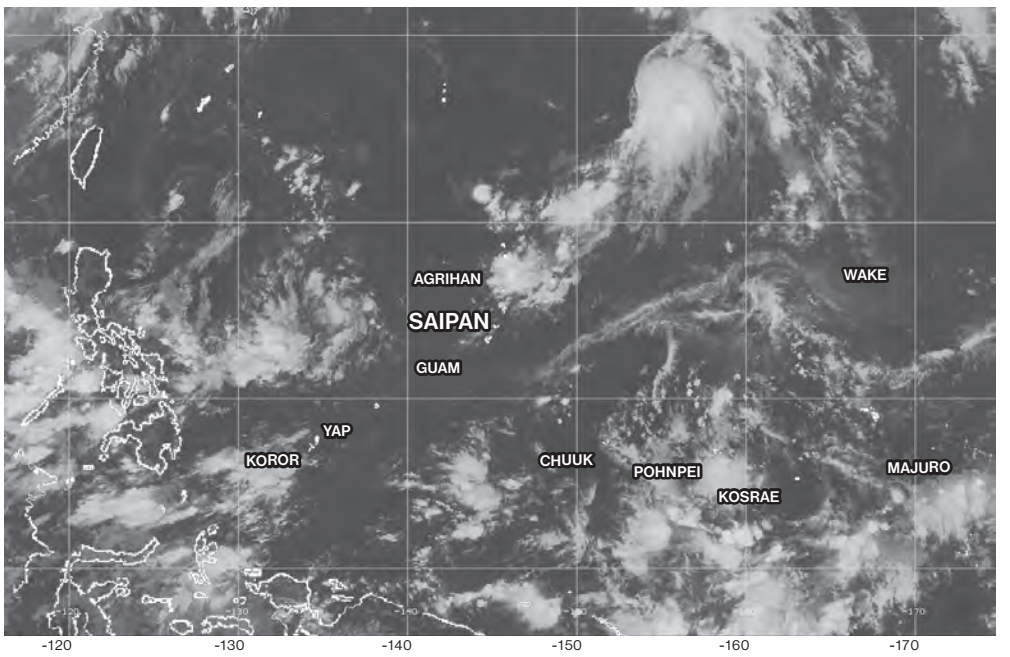
The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
Partly cloudy. Isolated showers and thunderstorms. Light and variable winds.	Partly sunny with scattered showers.	Partly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of showers.	Partly sunny with a 30 percent chance of showers.	Partly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms.
87° 79°	87° 79°	87° 79°	88° 79°	88° 79°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 7:14 AM, WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2023

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Radar showed only spotty showers over the Marianas this morning and Satellite showed heavier showers remain far northeast of Saipan. Light south to southwest surface winds persist and Ipan buoy shows combined seas near 3 feet. A ridge of high pressure remains just east and southeast of the Marianas.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: https://www.weather.gov/gum/

MICRONESIA	▲ ▼ °F	
Guam and Rota	Partly Cloudy	86° / 79°
Palau	Thunderstorm	84° / 77°
Yap	Partly Cloudy	85° / 79°
Chuuk	Thunderstorm	86° / 80°
Pohnpei	Thunderstorm	86° / 77°
Kosrae	Thunderstorm	86° / 77°
Majuro	Partly Cloudy	85° / 81°

AROUND THE GLOBE	▲ ▼ °F	
Auckland	Mostly Sunny	66° / 55°
Beijing	Sunny	46° / 23°
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	82° / 73°
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	83° / 73°
London	Sunny	45° / 36°
Los Angeles	Sunny	74° / 57°
Manila	Partly Cloudy	90° / 77°
Melbourne	Rain	79° / 57°
Miami	Partly Cloudy	81° / 75°
New York	Showers	53° / 45°
Osaka	Showers	63° / 50°
Paris	Mostly Sunny	46° / 34°
Busan	Partly Cloudy	61° / 37°
Rome	Rain	54° / 41°
Salem	Partly Cloudy	69° / 45°
San Francisco	Showers	59° / 44°
Seoul	Sunny	50° / 34°
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	66° / 52°
Washington, DC	Showers	52° / 44°

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:05 AM	6:19 PM
Friday	6:05 AM	6:19 PM
Saturday	6:05 AM	6:18 PM
Sunday	6:05 AM	6:17 PM
Monday	6:05 AM	6:16 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	5:13 AM	5:58 PM	-
Friday	6:00 AM	6:32 PM	-
Saturday	6:46 AM	7:05 PM	-
Sunday	7:33 AM	7:39 PM	-
Monday	8:21 AM	8:14 PM	-

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY	FEET	
01:26 AM	Low Tide	0.95
06:44 AM	High Tide	1.81
1:33 PM	Low Tide	0.20
8:01 PM	High Tide	1.83

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF SEPTEMBER 1, 2023

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	9:50AM	10:30AM	Daily
UA156	7:10PM	7:55PM	1 up to Sep 4

SAIPAN- NARITA (NRT)

UA824	7:25AM	9:55AM	1, 3, 5

GUAM-MANILA (MNL)

PR 111	5:55AM	7:55AM	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
PR 111	7:05AM	9:05AM	7
UA193	6:55PM	10:55PM	2, 5 via Palau
UA183	7:15PM	9:10PM	Daily up to Sep 4
UA183	7:20PM	9:10PM	Daily from Sep 5

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ626/703	4:20AM	10:35PM	1, 4, 5, 7
7C3403/2305	4:45AM	10:20PM	Daily
UA117/183	9:50AM	9:10PM	Daily via Guam
UA117/193	9:50AM	10:55PM	2, 5 via Guam, Palau

SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)

TW308	3:15AM	7:00AM	Daily
OZ626	4:20AM	7:55AM	1, 4, 5, 7
7C3403	4:45AM	8:35AM	Daily
7C3405	4:10PM	7:45PM	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

7C3451	3:20AM	6:30AM	1, 4, 5, 7

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	8:00AM	8:50AM	Daily
UA112	5:15PM	6:05PM	1 up to Sep 4

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

UA825	9:25PM	1:50AM+1	2, 4, 7

MANILA (MNL)-GUAM

UA184	10:25PM	4:25AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA192	10:25PM	6:10AM+1	2, 5 via Palau
PR110	10:30PM	4:25AM+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7
PR110	11:40PM	5:35AM+1	6
UA184	11:50PM	5:50AM+1	2, 5

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

OZ702/625	12:05PM	2:55AM+1	3, 4, 6, 7
UA184/174	10:25PM	8:50AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6,7 via Guam
UA192/174	10:25PM	8:50AM+1	2, 5 via Palau, Guam
7C2306/3406	11:10PM	3:10PM+1	Daily
UA184/174	11:50PM	8:50AM+1	2, 5 via Guam

INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3406	9:30AM	3:10PM	Daily
TW307	8:30PM	2:15AM+1	Daily
OZ625	9:25PM	2:55AM+1	3, 4, 6, 7
7C3404	10:10PM	3:40AM+1	Daily

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

7C3452	9:35PM	2:20AM+1	3, 4, 6, 7

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JUNE 1, 2022

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1301	8:30	9:00	Daily
1302	11:00	11:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
1302	12:00	12:30	Tues/Thurs/Sat/Sun
1303	15:30	16:00	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

LIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3401	12:00	12:30	Mon/Wed/Fri

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	10:00	10:15	Daily
1208	14:00	14:15	Daily
1209	15:00	15:15	Daily
1210	16:00	16:15	Daily
1211	17:00	17:15	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3101	9:30	10:00	Daily
3102	13:00	13:30	Tues/Thurs/Sat/Sun
3102	14:00	14:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
3103	16:30	17:00	Daily

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
4301	13:00	13:30	Mon/Wed/Fri

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	10:30	10:45	Daily
2108	14:30	14:45	Daily
2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
2111	17:30	17:45	Daily

Business

Apple's new iPhones get faster chips, better cameras, new charging ports

CUPERTINO, Calif. (AP)—Apple on Tuesday unveiled its next generation of iPhones—a lineup that will boast better cameras, faster processors, a new charging system and a price hike for the fanciest model.

The showcase at Apple's headquarters in Cupertino, California, comes as the company tries to reverse a mild slump that has seen its sales drop from last year in three consecutive quarters. The malaise is a key reason Apple's stock price has dipped by about 10% since mid-July, dropping the company's market value below the $3 trillion threshold it reached for the first time earlier this summer.

Investors apparently weren't impressed with what Apple rolled out Tuesday. The company's shares fell nearly 2% Tuesday, a steeper decline than the major market indexes.

AP

The iPhone 15 Pro is displayed after its introduction on the Apple campus, Tuesday, Sept. 12, 2023, in Cupertino, Calif

As has been case with Apple and other smartphone makers, the four types of iPhone 15 models aren't making any major leaps in technology. But Apple added enough new bells and whistles to the top-of-the line model—the iPhone 15 Pro Max—to boost its starting price by $100, or 9%, from last year's version to $1,200. As part of the higher base price, the cheapest iPhone 15 Pro Max will provide 256 megabytes of storage, up from 128 megabytes for the least expensive version of the iPhone 14 Pro Max.

Apple is holding the line on prices for rest of the lineup, with the basic iPhone 15 selling for $800, the iPhone 15 Plus for $900 and the iPhone 15 Pro for $1,000.

Although maintaining those prices are bound to squeeze Apple's profit margins and put further pressure on the company's stock price, Investing.com analyst Thomas Monteiro believes it's a prudent move with still-high inflation and spiking interest rates pinching household budgets. "The reality was that Apple found itself in a challenging position leading up to this event," Monteiro said.

And the price hike for the iPhone 15 Pro Max could help Apple boost sales if consumers continue to gravitate toward the company's premium models. Wedbush Securities analyst Dan Ives expects the iPhone 15 Pro and Pro Max to account for about 75% of the device's total sales in the upcoming year.

All the new models will be available in stores Sept. 22, with preorders beginning this Friday.

One of the biggest changes that Apple announced is a new way to charge the iPhone 15 models and future generations. The company is switching to the USB-C standard that is already widely used on many devices, including its Mac computers and many of its iPads.

Apple is being forced to phase out the Lightning port cables it rolled out in 2012 because of a mandate that European regulators plan to impose in 2024.

Although consumers often don't like change, the transition to USB-C ports may not be that inconvenient. That's because the standard is already widely used on a range of computers, smartphones and other devices people already own. The shift to USB-C may even be a popular move since that standard typically charges devices more quickly and also offers faster data transfer speeds.

DOJ: Google exploited exclusive search engine deals to maintain advantage over rivals

WASHINGTON (AP)—Google has exploited its dominance of the internet search market to lock out competitors and smother innovation, the Department of Justice said Tuesday at the opening of the biggest U.S. antitrust trial in a quarter century.

"This case is about the future of the internet and whether Google's search engine will ever face meaningful competition," said Kenneth Dintzer, the Justice Department's lead litigator.

Over the next 10 weeks, federal lawyers and state attorneys general will try to prove Google rigged the market in its favor by locking in its search engine as the default choice in a plethora of places and devices. U.S. District Judge Amit Mehta likely won't issue a ruling until early next year. If he decides Google broke the law, another trial will decide what steps should be taken to rein in the Mountain View, California-based company.

Top executives at Google and its corporate parent Alphabet Inc., as well as those from other powerful technology companies are expected to testify. Among them is likely to be Alphabet CEO Sundar Pichai, who succeeded Google co-founder Larry Page four years ago. Court documents also suggest that Eddy Cue, a high ranking Apple executive, might be called to the stand.

The Justice Department filed its antitrust lawsuit against Google nearly three years ago during the Trump administration, alleging that the company has used its internet search dominance to gain an unfair advantage against competitors. Government lawyers say Google protects its franchise through a form of payola, shelling out billions of dollars annually to be the default search engine on the iPhone and on web browsers such as Apple's Safari and Mozilla's Firefox.

"Google pays more than $10 billion per year for these privileged positions," Dintzer said.

"Google's contracts ensure that rivals cannot match the search quality ad monetization, especially on phones," he said. "Through this feedback loop, this wheel has been turning for more than 12 years. It always turns to Google's advantage."

Google counters that it faces a wide range of competition despite commanding about 90% of the internet search market. Its rivals, the company argues, range from search engines such as Microsoft's Bing to websites like Amazon and Yelp, where consumers can post questions about what to buy or where to go. "There are lots of way users access the web other than default search engines, and people use them all the time," said attorney John Schmidtlein, a partner at the law firm Williams & Connolly which is representing Google.

But the more searches Google processes, the more data it collects, data that can be used to improve future searches and give it an even bigger advantage over its rivals, Dintzer said. "User data is the oxygen for a search engine," he said. Because of its market dominance, "Google search and ad products are better than its rivals can hope to be."

That is why, he said, Google pays so much for its search engine to be the default option on products from Apple and other companies.

Google "began weaponizing defaults" more than 15 years ago, Dintzer said, citing an internal Google document calling its arrangements an "Achilles Heel" for rival search engines offered by Yahoo and MSN.

He also alleged that Google strong-armed Apple into giving its search engine a default position on its devices as a condition for revenue sharing. "This is not a negotiation," Dintzer said. "This is Google saying: Take it or leave it."

Litigators argue the company's anticompetitive tactics prevented Apple from developing a search engine of its own.

And Dintzer said Google deleted documents to keep them out of court proceedings and sought to hide others under attorney-client privilege.

"They destroyed documents for years," Dintzer said. "They turned history off, your honor, so they could rewrite it in this court."

While questioning Google chief economist Hal Varian—the trial's first witness—Dintzer produced a July 2003 memo in which Varian urged Google employees to be cautious about how they discussed competition with Microsoft, lest they raise antitrust concerns. "We should be careful about what we say in both public and private," Varian wrote. References to "cutting off their air supply" and similar comments, for instance, "should be avoided."

From Google's perspective, perpetual improvements to its search engine explain why people almost reflexively keep coming back to it, a habit that long ago made "Googling" synonymous with looking things up on the internet. Schmidtlein said Google's tweaks simply made its search better than key rival Bing. "At every critical juncture," he said, "they were beaten in the market."

The trial begins just a couple weeks after the 25th anniversary of the first investment in Google—a $100,000 check written by Sun Microsystems co-founder Andy Bechtolsheim that enabled Page and Sergey Brin to set up shop in a Silicon Valley garage.

Today, Google's corporate parent, Alphabet, is worth $1.7 trillion and employs 182,000 people, with most of the money coming from $224 billion in annual ad sales flowing through a network of digital services anchored by a search engine that fields billions of queries a day.

Jack in the Box partners with ARC to provide relief in Guam

GUAM—Jack in the Box and our customers are partnering with the American Red Cross to support relief efforts for families who continue to be impacted by Typhoon Mawar.

In response to the devastating typhoon that struck Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands, all Jack in the Box restaurants in Guam are fundraising for the American Red Cross Disaster Relief, through September 30.

Guests who donate $1 will receive a coupon for a free small curly fry to use during their next visit. Jack in the Box has pledged to match all donations dollar-for-dollar, up to $40,000.

The American Red Cross has teams across the U.S. providing safe shelter, warm meals, and clean water to help families through their most challenging moments. Here at home, American Red Cross volunteers are working tirelessly to meet the basic needs of Guam residents impacted by disasters by providing relief supplies and meals throughout the island.

Please stop by your nearest Jack in the Box today—on Marine Corps Drive in Tamuning and in Harmon—to support American Red Cross Disaster Relief efforts.

About PARS Group LLC

PARS Group LLC, based in Kirkland, Washington, was founded in 2011 and is a Jack in the Box franchise organization with locations in the United States. The company has a history of sponsorships with the Seattle Mariners, Seahawks, and Children's Hospital.

About Jack in the Box Inc.

Jack in the Box Inc. (NASDAQ: JACK), founded and headquartered in San Diego, California, is a restaurant company that operates and franchises Jack in the Box, one of the nation's largest hamburger chains with more than 2,200 restaurants across 21 states, and Del Taco, the second largest Mexican-American QSR chain by units in the U.S. with approximately 600 restaurants across 16 states. For more information on both brands, including franchising opportunities, visit www.jackinthebox.com and www.deltaco.com. ***(PR)***

Nation

McCarthy directs House to open impeachment inquiry into Biden

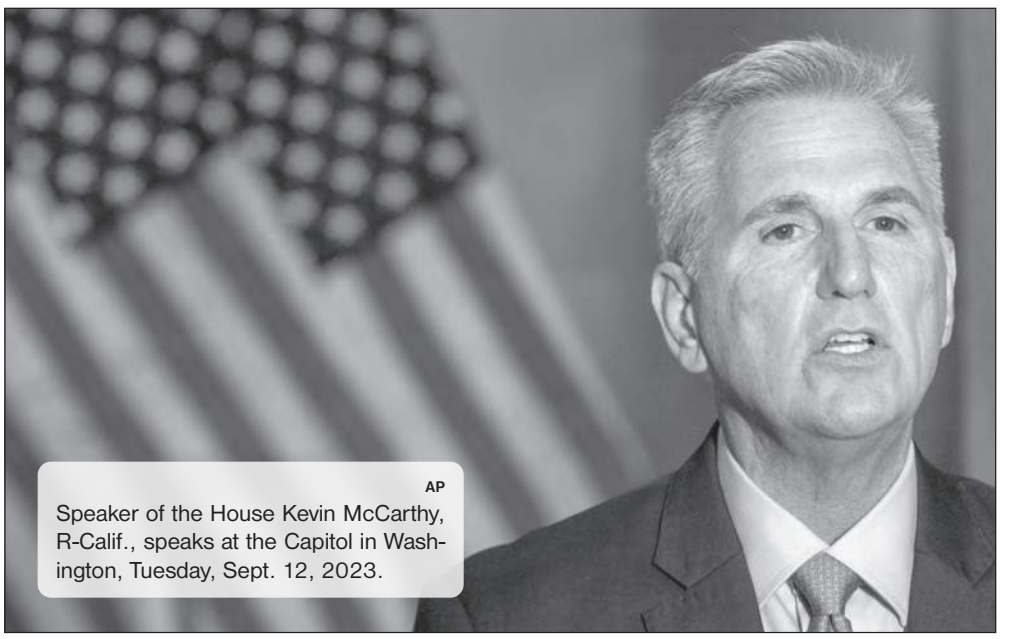
WASHINGTON (AP)—Speaker Kevin McCarthy announced Tuesday he is directing the U.S. House to open an impeachment inquiry into President Joe Biden over his family's business dealings, launching historic proceedings ahead of the 2024 election.

McCarthy said that House investigations so far "paint a picture of a culture of corruption" around the Biden family as Republicans probe the business dealings of the president's son, Hunter Biden, from before the Democratic president took office.

"These are allegations of abuse of power, obstruction and corruption, and they warrant further investigation by the House of Representatives," McCarthy, R-Calif., said at the Capitol, announcing he was directing the House led by the Oversight Committee "to open a formal impeachment inquiry."

The White House shot back, calling the action in the midst of the presidential campaign "extreme politics at its worst."

"House Republicans have been investigating the president for nine months, and they've turned up no evidence of wrongdoing," said spokesman Ian Sams.



AP

Speaker of the House Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., speaks at the Capitol in Washington, Tuesday, Sept. 12, 2023.

Acting on his own, the Republican speaker McCarthy faces mounting pressure from his right flank to take action against Biden or risk being ousted from his leadership job — while he also is struggling to pass legislation needed to avoid a federal government shutdown at the end of the month.

McCarthy is launching the inquiry without a House vote, and it's unclear if he would even have enough support from his slim GOP majority. Some lawmakers have panned the evidence so far as not reaching the Constitution's bar of "high crimes and misdemeanors."

The White House and others pointed to McCarthy's past statements when he insisted a speaker acting unilaterally to launch an impeachment inquiry would have no legitimacy. McCarthy "flipflopped because he doesn't have support," Sams said.

An inquiry is a step toward impeachment, which used to be rare, and McCarthy essentially outlined the potential charges ahead. With Donald Trump now the Republican front-runner to challenge Biden in next year's election, GOP allies are working to detract attention from the indicted former president's legal challenges and turn a negative spotlight on Biden.

The inquiry will be led by Oversight Committee Chairman James Comer, in coordination with Judiciary Committee Chairman Jim Jordan and Ways & Means Chairman Jason Smith. They are heading across the Capitol Wednesday to brief the Senate.

Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell has warned House Republicans off the effort, but said Tuesday, "I don't think Speaker McCarthy needs advice from the Senate."

House Democratic Leader Hakeem Jeffries called it an "illegitimate impeachment inquiry" and said Democrats will defend Biden "until the very end."

"There is not a shred of evidence that President Joe Biden has engaged in wrongdoing," Jeffries said. "President Joe Biden is a good man. He's an honest man. He's a patriotic man."

The Republican speaker is once again at a political crossroads — trying to keep his most conservative lawmakers satisfied and save his own job. It's a familiar political bind for McCarthy, who is juggling the impeachment inquiry and a government shutdown threat with no clear end game.

Government funding is to run out on Sept. 30, which is the end of the federal fiscal year, and Congress must pass new funding bills or risk a shutdown and the interruption of government services.

5 ex-cops charged with federal civil rights violations in Tyre Nichols beating death

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP)—Five former Memphis police officers were charged Tuesday with federal civil rights violations in the beating death of Tyre Nichols as they continue to fight second-degree murder charges in state courts arising from the killing.

Tadarrius Bean, Desmond Mills, Demetrius Haley, Emmitt Martin and Justin Smith were indicted in U.S. District Court in Memphis. The four-count indictment charges them with deprivation of rights under the color of law through excessive force and failure to intervene, and through deliberate indifference; conspiracy to witness tampering; and obstruction of justice through witness tampering.

The charges come nine months after the violent beating during a Jan. 7 traffic stop near Nichols' Memphis home, in which they punched, kicked and slugged the 29-year-old with a baton as he yelled for his mother. Nichols died at a hospital three days later. The five former officers, all Black like Nichols, have pleaded not guilty to state charges of second-degree murder and other alleged offenses in the case.

"We all heard Mr. Nichols cry out for his mother and say 'I'm just trying to go home,'" Attorney General Merrick Garland said in a video statement after the indictment. "Tyre Nichols should be alive today."

U.S. Attorney Kevin Ritz in West Tennessee said at an afternoon news briefing that the state and federal cases are on separate tracks. Ritz declined to predict how quickly they would proceed.

Kristen Clarke, who leads the U.S. Department of Justice's civil rights division, said at the appearance that the five former officers used excessive force, failed to advise medical personnel about Nichols' injuries and conspired to cover up their misconduct.

"In our country, no one is above the law," she said, adding she met earlier Tuesday with Nichols' mother and stepfather.

Caught on police video, the Nichols beating was one in a string of violent encounters between police and Black people that sparked protests and renewed debate about police brutality and police reform in the U.S.

Nichols' mother, RowVaughn Wells, said she was surprised that the federal charges "happened so quickly." The investigation that led to the indictment was announced in the weeks after the Jan. 7 beating death.

She said her son was a "free spirit."

"He should be here today," she said during a news conference at a Memphis church. "Because of those five officers, he's not."

Attorneys for several of the former officers said the indictment was no surprise, and some added that their clients will defend themselves against the charges.

The indictment says the officers failed to tell dispatchers, their supervisor and emergency medical technicians they knew Nichols had been hit repeatedly, trying to cover up their use of force and shield themselves from criminal liability.

Additionally, the indictment alleges instances where the officers used their body cameras to limit what evidence could be captured at the scene: Martin moved his body camera where it wouldn't show video of the beating; Haley and Smith activated theirs only after the assault; and Haley and Mills took theirs off when emergency medical personnel were on the scene.

At the arrest scene, the officers afterward discussed hitting Nichols with "straight haymakers," even as Nichols' condition deteriorated and he became unresponsive, the indictment said. Nichols could be seen on police video on the ground, slumped against a police car.

The indictment accuses the officers of gathering after the beating and saying, among other things, that "I thought when he wasn't going to fall, we about to kill this man." The indictment does not specify which officer made that statement.

The indictment also alleges the officers falsely stated Nichols actively resisted arrest at the beating scene and that he grabbed on Smith's protective vest and pulled on the officers' duty belts.

A hearing was set for Friday morning in a federal lawsuit filed by Nichols' mother against the five ex-officers, the city of Memphis and its police department. The former officers then have a scheduled appearance Friday afternoon in state court.

The Justice Department announced an investigation in July into how Memphis Police Department officers use force and conduct arrests, one of several "patterns and practices" investigations it has undertaken in other U.S. cities.

In March, the Justice Department said it was conducting a separate review concerning use of force, de-escalation strategies and specialized units in the Memphis Police Department.

Georgia election case prosecutors cite fairness in urging 1 trial for Trump, 18 other defendants

ATLANTA (AP)—Prosecutors who have accused former President Donald Trump and 18 others of participating in an illegal scheme to overturn the results of the 2020 election in Georgia maintain that all the defendants should be tried together, citing efficiency and fairness.

The case was brought under the state's anti-racketeering law, meaning the same witnesses and evidence will be used in any trial, they wrote in a brief they said was filed Tuesday. Holding several lengthy trials instead would "create an enormous strain on the judicial resources" of the county superior court and would randomly favor the defendants tried later, who would have the advantage of seeing the state's evidence and arguments ahead of time, prosecutors wrote.

Fulton County District Attorney Fani Willis said last month in announcing the charges that she wanted to try all 19 defendants together. Two of the people charged have filed speedy trial demands, and Judge Scott McAfee set their trial for Oct. 23. At a hearing last week, he said it seemed "a bit unrealistic" to imagine that all of the defendants could be tried that soon and asked Willis' team for a brief explaining why they felt that was necessary.

Lawyers Kenneth Chesebro and Sidney Powell are the two who have filed speedy trial demands. They also requested to be tried separately from each other, but McAfee denied that request. Chesebro is accused of working on the coordination and execution of a plan to have 16 Georgia Republicans sign a certificate declaring falsely that Trump won and declaring themselves the state's "duly elected and qualified" electors. Powell is accused of participating in a breach of election equipment in rural Coffee County.

Most of the other defendants have filed motions to be tried alone or in smaller groups, but prosecutors noted that those defendants have not waived their rights to file their own speedy trial demands. The deadline for that is Nov. 5, and if such demands were filed it would trigger one or more trials starting within the two-month court term that begins Nov. 6, with the trial for Chesebro and Powell likely still underway. That could lead to multiple trials in the high-profile case happening simultaneously, creating security issues and "unavoidable burdens" on witnesses and victims, prosecutors argued.

Requiring defendants to waive their speedy trial right as a condition to separate their case "would prevent the logistical quagmire described above, the inevitable harm to victims and witnesses, and the risk of gamesmanship," prosecutors wrote. Additionally, they argued, defendants who say they want to be tried separately because they won't be ready by Oct. 23 should have to inform the court when they expect to be ready for trial.

Five of the defendants are seeking to move their cases to federal court, and lawyers for Trump have said he may do the same. McAfee expressed concern last week about proceeding to trial in the state court while those attempts are ongoing because the law that allows federal officials to move state charges to federal court in some cases says "a judgment of conviction shall not be entered" unless the case is first sent back to state court. But prosecutors noted that the law explicitly allows a case to continue to move forward in a state court while the question of moving a case to federal court is pending.

Asia

ASIAN BRIEFS

Nobel winner Maria Ressa acquitted of tax evasion

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Nobel Peace Prize winner Maria Ressa was acquitted of a final tax evasion charge Tuesday though she still faces two remaining legal cases she believes the former Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte used to muzzle her critical reporting. Ressa and her online news organization Rappler had faced five tax evasion charges but a court acquitted her of four of the charges in January. A different court heard the fifth charge and acquitted her Tuesday. "Facts wins, truth wins, justice wins," she told reporters outside the courthouse. Ressa and Russian journalist Dmitry Muratov were awarded the 2021 Nobel for their efforts to safeguard freedom of expression by fighting for the survival of their news organizations and defying government efforts to shut them. She had said the charges against her were politically motivated as Rappler was critical of Duterte's brutal crackdown on illegal drugs that left thousands of mostly petty drug suspects dead. The International Criminal Court is investigating the crackdown as a possible crime against humanity.

Rappler also criticized Duterte's handling of the coronavirus pandemic including prolonged lockdowns that deepened poverty, caused one of the country's worst recessions and sparked allegations of corruption in government medical purchases. Ressa also said there appeared to be a "lifting of fear" under the Philippines' new leader—Ferdinand Marcos Jr., who is the namesake son of the dictator overthrown in the army-backed "people power" uprising in 1986. Ressa is still appealing to the Supreme Court against an online libel conviction, while Rappler is challenging a closure order issued by the Securities and Exchange Commission.

N. Korea fires 2 short-range ballistic missiles toward eastern seas

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—North Korea fired two short-range ballistic missiles toward its eastern seas Wednesday, its neighbors said. The launch came as North Korean leader Kim Jong Un was traveling in Russia for a meeting with President Vladimir Putin while there are international concerns about a potential arms deal that could fuel Moscow's war efforts in Ukraine. South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said it detected the missiles being fired 10 minutes apart from an area in Sunan, the site of Pyongyang's international airport, and that the weapons flew cross-country toward the country's eastern seas. It didn't immediately say how far the weapons flew. Japan's Coast Guard, citing Tokyo's Defense Ministry, said the missile likely has landed but still urged vessels around the Japanese coasts to watch out for falling objects. Kim has been using the international distraction caused by Russia's war in Ukraine to ramp up the North's weapons development, a process that has included more than 100 missile launches since the start of 2022. According to U.S. officials, Putin could use his meeting with Kim to secure more supplies of North Korean artillery and other ammunition to refill declining reserves and prolong his invasion of Ukraine. Experts say Kim in return could seek badly needed economic aid and sophisticated weapons technologies to advance his nuclear-weapons and missiles program.

Japan's Kishida shuffles Cabinet, party posts to solidify power

TOKYO (AP)—Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida is shuffling his Cabinet and key party posts Wednesday in an apparent move to strengthen his position before a key party leadership vote next year. It's the second Cabinet shuffle since Kishida took office in October 2021 when he promised fairer distribution of economic growth, measures to tackle Japan's declining population and a stronger national defense. Russia's war in Ukraine, rising energy prices and Japan's soaring defense costs have created challenges in his tenure, keeping his support ratings at low levels. Kishida's three-year term as Liberal Democratic Party president expires in September 2024, when he would seek a second term. His faction is only the fourth largest in the LDP, so he must stay on good terms with the others to maintain his position. He distributed Cabinet posts to reflect the balance of power, and nearly half of the positions are shared between the two largest factions associated with late leader Shinzo Abe and former leader Taro Aso. His Cabinet resigned en masse in a ceremonial meeting earlier Wednesday before retained Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirokazu Matsuno announced the new lineup. Kishida appointed five women in his 19-member Cabinet. He currently has two, and five would match Abe's 2014 Cabinet and one in 2001 under then-Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi.

5 siblings of girl found dead near London ordered put into child protection center

LAHORE, Pakistan (AP)—A Pakistani court on Tuesday ordered the five siblings of a 10-year-old girl who was found dead with extensive injuries near London put into a children's protection center after they were located by police. The police are continuing their search for the girl's father and stepmother in connection with her death. Sara Sharif was found dead at her home in Woking, on the southern outskirts of London, on Aug. 10. British police identified her father, Urfan Sharif, his wife, Beinash Batool, and Urfan's brother, Faisal Malik, as people they want to speak to in the investigation. An autopsy of the girl didn't establish a cause of death but showed that she had suffered "multiple and extensive injuries, which are likely to have been caused over a sustained and extended period of time," British police said in a statement. Urfan Sharif traveled to Islamabad, Pakistan's capital, with Batool and Malik on Aug. 9, bringing the five children with them. The couple then went into hiding, officials say. The five children were recovered by police Monday evening from Urfan Sharif's family home in Jhelum, about 175 kilometers (110 miles) northwest of Lahore in central Pakistan. The children, ranging in age from 1 to 13, were found after Interpol issued yellow notices for them. Yellow notices are used to help locate missing persons, often minors.

More than dozen people feared dead in massive fire at apartment building in Hanoi

HANOI, Vietnam (AP)—Around a dozen people are feared dead after a massive fire broke out at an apartment building in Vietnam's capital, Hanoi, state media said on Wednesday. The fire is believed to have started late Tuesday and 54 of the 70 people who were rescued from the building were hospitalized with injuries, the report said. Authorities are yet to confirm the exact death toll. The fire has been extinguished but rescue operations are continuing.

World

Thousands feared dead and thousands more missing due to flooding in Libya

AP

A general view of the city of Derna is seen on Tuesday, Sept. 12., 2023, after storm Daniel caused devastating floods in Libya.

CAIRO (AP)—Emergency workers uncovered more than 1,500 bodies in the wreckage of Libya's eastern city of Derna on Tuesday, and it was feared the toll could surpass 5,000 after floodwaters smashed through dams and washed away entire neighborhoods of the city.

The startling death and devastation wreaked by Mediterranean storm Daniel pointed to the storm's intensity, but also the vulnerability of a nation torn apart by chaos for more than a decade. The country is divided by rival governments, one in the east, the other in the west, and the result has been neglect of infrastructure in many areas.

Outside help was only just starting to reach Derna on Tuesday, more than 36 hours after the disaster struck. The floods damaged or destroyed many access roads to the coastal city of some 89,000.

Footage showed dozens of bodies covered by blankets in the yard of one hospital. Another image showed a mass grave piled with bodies. More than 1,500 corpses were collected, and half of them had been buried as of Tuesday evening, the health minister for eastern Libya said.

At least one official put the death toll at more than 5,000. The state-run news agency quoted Mohammed Abu-Lamousha, a spokesman for the east Libya interior ministry, as saying that more than 5,300 people had died in Derna alone. Derna's ambulance authority said earlier Tuesday that 2,300 had died.

But the toll is likely to be higher, said Tamer Ramadan, Libya envoy for the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. He told a U.N. briefing in Geneva via videoconference from Tunisia that at least 10,000 people were still missing. He said later Tuesday that more than 40,000 people have been displaced.

The situation in Libya is "as devastating as the situation in Morocco," Ramadan said, referring to the deadly earthquake that hit near the city of Marrakesh on Friday night.

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres conveyed his solidarity with the Libyan people and said the United Nations "is working with local, national and international partners to get urgently needed humanitarian assistance to those in affected areas," U.N. spokesman Stephane Dujarric said.

The destruction came to Derna and other parts of eastern Libya on Sunday night. As the storm pounded the coast, Derna residents said they heard loud explosions and realized that dams outside the city had collapsed. Flash floods were unleashed down Wadi Derna, a river running from the mountains through the city and into the sea.

Putin welcomes Kim Jong Un at cosmodrome for meeting

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—North Korean leader Kim Jong Un arrived at a cosmodrome in Russia's Far East on Wednesday for a meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin that underscores how the two leaders' interests are aligning in the face of their separate, intensifying confrontations with the United States.

Putin welcomed Kim at the entrance to a launch vehicle assembly building. The two men shook hands and Putin said he was "very glad to see" Kim. Kim's translator thanked Putin for the warm welcome, "despite being busy." The two leaders will inspect the cosmodrome and then sit down for talks, Russian state media reported.

Hours earlier, North Korea fired two ballistic missiles toward the sea, extending a highly provocative run in North Korean weapons testing since the start of 2022, as Kim used the distraction caused by Putin's war on Ukraine to accelerate his weapons development.

For Putin, the meeting with Kim is an opportunity to refill ammunition stores that the 18-month-old war has drained. For Kim, it's a chance to get around crippling U.N. sanctions and years of diplomatic isolation. Kim is expected to seek economic aid and military technology, though an arms deal would violate international sanctions that Russia supported in the past.

South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff didn't immediately say how far the North Korean missiles flew. Japan's Coast Guard, citing Tokyo's Defense Ministry, said the missiles have likely already landed but still urged vessels to watch for falling objects.

Kim's personal train stopped in Khasan, a station on the Russia-North Korea border, early Tuesday where it was met by a military honor guard and a brass band. He was met on a red carpet by regional Gov. Oleg Kozhemyako and Natural Resources Minister Alexander Kozlov, according to North Korean state media and video posted on social media.

Kim said his decision to visit Russia four years after his previous visit showed how Pyongyang is "prioritizing the strategic importance" of its relations with Moscow, North Korea's official news agency said Wednesday. The Korean Central News Agency said Kim then left for his destination, but it didn't specify where.

Environment

UN report says the world is way off track to curb global warming, but offers ways to fix that

By SETH BORENSTEIN
AP Science Writer

With the world far off track on its 2015 pledge to curb global warming, a new United Nations report central to upcoming climate negotiations details how quickly and deeply energy and financial systems must change to get back on a safer path.

"The window of opportunity to secure a livable and sustainable future for all is rapidly closing," Friday's report warned.

The globe has to cut its emissions of heat-trapping gases by 43% by 2030, compared to 2019 levels, and 60% by 2035, the report said. To get there, the report said, "the phase-out of unabated fossil fuels is required," using a phrase international climate negotiators have shied away from before. It also said phasing out the internal combustion engine would be a huge help.

And the way money flows—such as investments, subsidies, loans, grants and payments for people and places hurt by warming's extreme weather—also has to change, the report recommended. It said countries need to stop $450 billion in annual subsidies for coal, oil and natural gas.

"Halting and reversing deforestation" and adopting better crop-growing practices are critical to fighting climate change, the report said. It noted that about 95% of deforestation is in the tropics, but global consumers drive the tree loss.

AP

Nicholas Hartnett, owner of Pure Power Solar, carries a panel as he and Brian Hoeppner, right, install a solar array on the roof of a home in Frankfort, Ky., July 17, 2023.

"We must urgently disrupt business as usual and unite like never before to move from ambition to action and from rhetoric to real results," upcoming international climate negotiations president Sultan Al Jaber said in a statement.

The first of its kind report, called the "global stocktake" on climate-fighting efforts, put such an emphasis on change that it used variations of the word "transform" more than 50 times in 47 pages.

"The report really puts a spotlight on that kind of transformation of systems that needs to take place," said David Waskow, international climate initiative director at the World Resources Institute. "We're past the point of incremental type of change if we're going to take seriously what needs to be done."

Former U.S. Vice President Al Gore said on social media, "This latest report shows that we are failing, not because we don't know the answers — but because we aren't doing our homework."

This comes as leaders of the top 20 economies, responsible for 80% of the world's greenhouse gas emissions, meet in India. United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres told them to act quickly on warming because "the climate crisis is worsening dramatically."

In 2015, as part of the landmark Paris Agreement, the countries of the world agreed to try to limit warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) or at least 2 degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit) since pre-industrial times. It's already warmed about 1.1 degrees (2 degrees Fahrenheit) since the mid-1800s.

Limiting warming to 1.5 degrees is another window of opportunity that is rapidly closing, the report said. Earlier this year, the World Meteorological Organization said there's a two-out-of-three chance that in the next five years, Earth will exceed that threshold for a year.

The report "feels like a final warning," said Climate Analytics CEO Bill Hare, a climate scientist. "'If you guys don't get your act together, we're going to cook.'"

The world just baked through the hottest summer ever recorded, and ocean temperatures keep smashing records.

The way the Paris agreement works is that every country makes its own carbon pollution pledges and efforts—and every five years they are supposed to ratchet them up. Key is that between those five years, climate negotiators come up with what's like a midterm grade for the world's efforts and a roadmap for preventing more dangerous warming.

That's the "global stocktake" released Friday. After three years of work by scientists, government officials and others, the United Nations' climate agency came up with a technical report that is supposed to lead to something bigger this December when world leaders and climate negotiators convene in Dubai.

Negotiators plan to use this report and discussions later this year to figure out what nations and the world as a whole will do next to fight climate change.

"This global stocktake report provides clear direction on how we can meet the expectations of the Paris agreement by taking decisive action in this critical decade," said Al Jaber, an oil executive. "To keep 1.5 within reach we must act with 'ambition and urgency' to reduce emissions 43% by 2030."

Two years ago, climate negotiators battled over adopting language calling for an end or phase-out of unabated coal use—where emissions are not captured and stored—and instead opted for weaker "phase down" language. Then, last year, a proposal to phase out or down all fossil fuels was made, but never was put on the agenda or officially debated.

AP

Solar panels are installed on a coal mixing hall of the former coal mine Auguste Victoria in Marl, Germany, Sept. 7, 2023.

AP

People attend a Climate Strike demonstration in Zurich, Switzerland, Nov. 6, 2021.

Urgency on climate change

% of U.S. adults who say the following

The Earths temperature is getting warmer ...

No evidence	Mostly due to natural patterns	Mostly due to human activity	Not sure
14	26	46	14

The president and Congress dealing with climate change should ...

Not be done	Not be too important	Be an important but lower priority	Be a top priority	No answer
11	17	34	37	1

Source: Pew research Center
Graphic: Staff, TNS

Group of 20 countries agree to increase clean energy but reach no deal on phasing out fossil fuels

NEW DELHI (AP)—Group of 20 leaders agreed Saturday to triple renewable energy and try to increase the funds for climate change-related disasters but maintained the status quo with regards to phasing out carbon spewing coal.

At a news conference shortly after the G20 leaders—whose countries also emit 80% of all planet-warming gases— announced the agreement, Amitabh Kant, a senior Indian government official leading some of the G20 negotiations, called it "probably the most vibrant, dynamic and ambitious document on climate action."

While most climate and energy experts were not as ebullient, they agreed that the G20 leaders had put out a strong message on climate action, even as the world is seeing increasingly frequent natural disasters such as extreme heat.

Even at the last meeting of the G20 climate ministers before the summit, disagreements had remained.

Global leaders and climate experts say the declaration had largely taken the conversation forward, setting the stage for an ambitious climate agreement when they meet at the global climate conference, COP28, in Dubai later this year.

"These 20 countries account for 80% of global emissions, so this declaration sends a powerful signal for climate progress," said Sultan al-Jaber, who will preside over the climate summit in Dubai.

Some climate activists said more could be done.

"While the G20's commitment to renewable energy targets is commendable, it sidesteps the root cause—our global dependency on fossil fuels," said Harjeet Singh of Climate Action Network International.

According to a report by Global Energy Monitor, an organization that tracks a variety of energy projects around the world, the G20 countries are home to 93% of global operating coal power plants and 88% of new proposed coal power plants that don't have carbon capture technologies.

"It's high time for rich nations in this group to lead by example, turn their promises into actions, and help forge a greener, more equitable future for all," said Singh, who has tracked international climate negotiations for over two decades.

For the first time, the G20 countries agreed on the amounts required to shift to clean energy. The document states that $5.9 trillion is need up to 2030 by developing countries to meet their climate goals. An additional $4 trillion will be needed every year until the end of the decade if developing countries are to reach net zero emissions by 2050, it said.

"This G20 has seen many firsts," said Madhura Joshi, a Mumbai-based energy analyst with the climate think tank E3G. "However, it's disappointing that the G20 could not agree on phasing down fossil fuels."

"Increasing renewables and reducing fossil fuels need to necessarily happen together—we need stronger bolder action from leaders on both. All eyes now on COP28—can the leaders deliver?" she said.

Life & Style

Nicki Minaj debuts new 'Pink Friday 2' song at MTV VMAs

By MARIA SHERMAN
AP Music Writer

At the 2023 MTV Video Music Awards, surprises were many—emcee Nicki Minaj performed her latest single, the dreamy "Last Time I Saw You" before jumping into a brand-new tease of a fiery new trap cut from her highly-anticipated "Pink Friday 2" album.

"I ain't nothing like you," she raps, "I'm on a whole other level."

That wasn't the only unexpected news: Within the first half-hour, the boy band NSYNC reunited on stage to present the first award for best pop video, which went to Taylor Swift.

In coordinating suits, Justin Timberlake, Joey Fatone, Lance Bass, Chris Kirkpatrick and JC Chasez shared the stage with Swift. Bass handed Swift a friendship bracelet just as fans do at the superstar's shows. "You're pop personified," she told the group.

She later returned to the stage at the Prudential Center in Newark, New Jersey, to pick up the song of the year trophy for "Anti-Hero."

Shakira received the Video Vanguard Award and performed an incredible bilingual medley of her decades of hits—"She Wolf," her collaboration with Rauw Alejandro "Te Felicito," the viral, record-breaking "Shakira: Bzrp Music Sessions, Vol. 53" with Bizarrap among them—in a set introduced by her "Hips Don't Lie" collaborator Wyclef Jean.

AP

Emcee Nicki Minaj appears during the MTV Video Music Awards on Tuesday, Sept. 12, 2023, at the Prudential Center in Newark, N.J.

"MTV Thank you for being such a big part of my career since I was only 18 years old," Shakira said, also thanking her parents and her children, who she brought to the show.

"Especially, I want to share this award with my fans who always, always support me through thick and thin. Thank you so much for being my army and help me fight all my battles," she said before switching to Spanish. "This is for you my people, my Latin American people, inside and outside this country. Thank you for inspiring me and for injecting me with so much strength and so much desire to move forward, I love you so much."

Diddy received the Global Icon Award from Mary J. Blige and his daughter Chance Combs. He is third recipient of the award, following the Red Hot Chili Peppers in 2022 and the Foo Fighters in 2021.

The legendary rapper also performed at the VMAs for the first time since 2005. It was an incredible collection of some of his biggest hits like "Bad Boy for Life" and "Mo Money Mo Problems," joined by some of his greatest collaborators: Yung Miami, Keyshia Cole, and sweetest of all, his son, King Combs.

Drew Barrymore dropped as National Book Awards host

NEW YORK (AP)—Drew Barrymore has been dropped as host of the upcoming National Book Awards ceremony, a day after her talk show taped its first episode since the Hollywood writers strike began.

"The National Book Awards is an evening dedicated to celebrating the power of literature, and the incomparable contributions of writers to our culture," the National Book Foundation, which presents the award, said in a statement Tuesday. "In light of the announcement that 'The Drew Barrymore Show' will resume production, the National Book Foundation has rescinded Ms. Barrymore's invitation to host the 74th National Book Awards Ceremony."

The awards event, sometimes referred to as the Academy Awards of the publishing world, is scheduled for Nov. 15.

EVAN AGOSTINI

Drew Barrymore attends the Time100 Gala, celebrating the 100 most influential people in the world, at Frederick P. Rose Hall, April 26, 2023, in New York.

Barrymore's resumption of her CBS talk show doesn't inherently cause issues with the actors guild, which is also on strike, as daytime talk shows are governed by a different Screen Actors Guild-American Federation of Radio and Television Artists contract that was renewed and ratified last year. But Barrymore's show employs at least three writers who are members of the writers guild, which has been on strike since early May. Those writers were picketing outside the CBS Broadcast Building on Monday.

Aerosmith postpones shows after Steven Tyler suffers vocal cord damage

AP

Steven Tyler of Aerosmith performs during night one of their "Peace Out: The Farewell Tour" on Saturday, Sept. 2, 2023, at Wells Fargo Center in Philadelphia.

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—Aerosmith has postponed a half-dozen dates on their farewell tour because frontman Steven Tyler injured his vocal cords during a performance, Tyler announced Monday.

"I'm heartbroken to say I have received strict doctor's orders not to sing for the next thirty days," Tyler, 75, posted on Instagram. "I sustained vocal cord damage during Saturday's show that led to subsequent bleeding. We'll need to postpone a few dates so that we can come back and give you the performance you deserve."

The band known for "Dream On," "Walk This Way" and "Sweet Emotion" began its "Peace Out" farewell tour on Sept. 2 with a tour-hour set in Philadelphia. Last Saturday's show was held on New York's Long Island.

The 40-date run was to include a stop in the band's hometown of Boston on New Year's Eve with the final show originally scheduled for Jan. 26 in Montreal.

The new dates are Jan. 29 in Detroit; Feb. 14 in Chicago; Feb. 17 in Washington D.C., Feb. 21 in Toronto; Feb. 26 in Raleigh, North Carolina and Feb. 29 in Cleveland, according to the Instagram announcement.

Mother unable to forgive and forget past mistakes

DEAR ABBY: I'm a recovering alcoholic who has been sober for more than 12 years. My road to sobriety has been long and dark, but I am proud of turning my life around and staying sober. My problem is how my mother treats me about it. She keeps reminding me of all the mistakes I made and the people I hurt when I was still drinking.

I also struggle with manic depression and have a hard enough time forgiving myself for my past actions, let alone having someone continually bring up every single one. I try every day to be a better person, and I'm an open book when it comes to my life and flaws.

My mother constantly accuses me of falling into my old habits and says I'm lying about it, even though she's been given truth and proof that I'm not. My long-term boyfriend and other family members can vouch for me. It's to the point where she's so in my head and cruel with the things she says that I'm spiraling back into depression, which is taking a toll on my confidence and mental health.

I have tried cutting her out of my life, but I live with a family member she's close to, so she shows up at our house and continues her belittling. I'm starting to lose patience and also my sanity. What do you do? Please help!

STILL STAYING SOBER

DEAR SOBER: Understand that your toxic mother may have some kind of fixation on torturing you. When she shows up, absent yourself immediately. From your experience, you know she's the kind of person who drives others to drink, so involve yourself with her as little as humanly possible. Your sobriety and sanity depend on it.

■■■

DEAR ABBY: My fiance and I are going back and forth about setting a date for our wedding. We have begun arguing lately about normal relationship issues. He calls them fights, when all I'm trying to do is express my feelings so we get on the same page. Then, instead of talking, he shuts down and clams up. It makes me crazy.

Now he's saying he won't set a date until our relationship is "healthy." He says we fight too much; I think it's a lack of communication. Now I say nothing because I'm afraid he won't want to set a date at all. I don't know what to do. Setting a date is important to me, but I'm starting to wonder if it's even worth it. Please help.

DESTINATION UNKNOWN IN NEW JERSEY

DEAR D.U.: Tell your fiance you think he was absolutely RIGHT when he told you he didn't want to set a wedding date until your relationship is "healthy." (I agree, by the way.) Tell him you love him and how important you feel communication is in any relationship. Then suggest the two of you seek premarital counseling.

Premarital counseling allows couples to preempt issues that could cause problems in a marriage, from child rearing to money to sex. If your fiance's method of handling disagreements is to shut down, there may be a way to correct it during some of those sessions.

■■■

To receive a collection of Abby's most memorable—and most frequently requested—poems and essays, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby—Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

DEAR ABBY

BY ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

I'M DOING A CROSSWORD PUZZLE. NUMBER THREE ACROSS SAYS "BIRD."
HMM..
I'VE GOT IT! "YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER"!
BUT THERE ARE ONLY FIVE BOXES.
I KNOW. THESE IDIOTS MAKE YOU WRITE REAL SMALL.

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

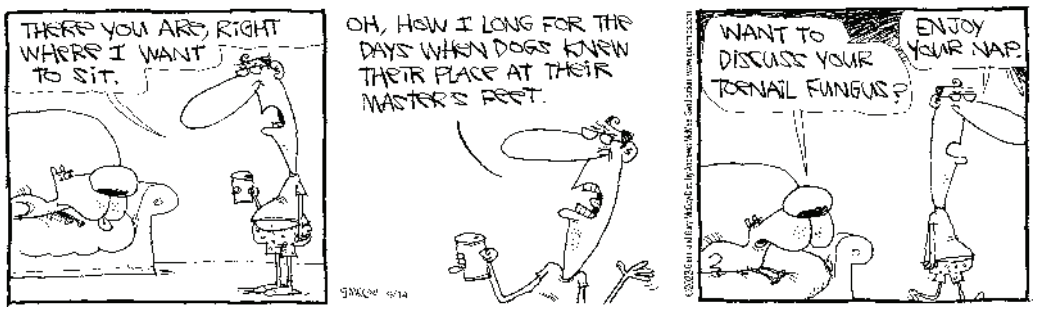
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

COOLING DOWN?
YEP. BEST PART OF A RUN.
THAT'S ONE BIG GLASS OF WATER.
YEAH. GOTTA REPLENISH. LOOK UNDER MY CHAIR.
GROSS! SHOULD I GET A TOWEL?
BRING SIX. I'M JUST GETTING STARTED.
9-14

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy


THERE YOU ARE, RIGHT WHERE I WANT TO SIT.
OH, HOW I LONG FOR THE DAYS WHEN DOGS KNEW THEIR PLACE AT THEIR MASTER'S FEET.
WANT TO DISCUSS YOUR TOENAIL FUNGUS?
ENJOY YOUR NAP.

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Drench
4 Chumps
8 Towering
12 Rage
13 Subsequently
14 Ending for buck
15 Emmy-winning comedy-drama about soccer coaching and compassion
17 Close
18 Prof's helpers
19 Paper-folding art
21 Giraffe cousins
24 Away from WSW
25 — de mer
26 Erie Canal mule
28 Glob
32 "My Way" composer Paul
34 Fanatic
36 Abbr. on a phone
37 Pine product
39 Cistern
41 Fish story
42 Central
44 Debt indicator
46 Clap for the performers
50 Game caller
51 Demolish, in Dover
52 Told a story
56 Elevator name
57 China (Pref.)
58 Notable time
59 Legendary loch
60 Despot
61 Parched

DOWN
1 Humorist
2 Before
3 Streamed lectures
4 Equilibrium
5 Sounds of relief
6 Cuban money
7 Snoozer's racket
8 Hybrid fruit
9 Bailiwick
10 Clay-rich soil
11 Petty of "Tank Girl"
16 Pool unit
20 Business mag
21 Poet Khayyam
22 Welles portrayal
23 — Diego
27 Candy heart word
29 Filled with optimism
30 Chow —
31 Sch. for tots
33 Lacking purpose
35 Sailor
38 Long of "Soul Food"
40 Extreme fear
43 Kirsten of "Wimbledon"
45 Narc's org.
46 "East of Eden" twin
47 Top of the head
48 Greek letters
49 Talking point?
53 Genetic letters
54 Mess up
55 24 hours

Solution time: 24 mins.

S	P	A		I	T	C	H		S	C	A	T
T	I	L		C	I	A	O		T	A	L	E
U	N	E		H	C	N	O	R	A	R	I	A
D	A	C	H	A			P	E	R			
			E	B	B	S		G	R	E	T	A
C	U	P	I	O	R	I	A		Y	V	E	S
P	R	E		D	E	E	R	E		E	R	E
I	G	F	R		A	V	F	M	A	R	I	A
C	F	I	F	B		F	S	A	U			
			C	U	D			N	S	Y	N	C
M	O	R	A	T	O	R	I	A		C	O	O
S	W	A	P		R	I	F	T		G	R	R
T	E	N	S		A	P	S	E		A	M	P

Yesterday's answer 9-14

1	2	3	■	4	5	6	7	■	8	9	10	11
12			■	13				■	14			
15			16					■	17			
■	■	18			■	19		20				
21	22				23	■	24			■	■	■
25			■	26		27	■	28		29	30	31
32			33	■	34		35	■	36			
37				38	■	39		40	■	41		
■	■	■	42		43	■	44		45			
46	47	48				49	■	50			■	■
51				■	52		53				54	55
56				■	57					■	58	
59				■	60					■	61	

STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Emma Kenney, 24; Dilshad Vadsaria, 38; Kimberly Williams-Paisley, 52; Robert Herjavec, 61.

Happy Birthday: Embrace life, go after your dreams and be satisfied, content and stress-free. Set a budget, define what's important to you and design a routine that meets your needs. You control your destiny. Making decisions that help you reach your objective will make a difference to the outcome. Believe in yourself and put in the work that will keep you moving forward. Your numbers are 9, 14, 21, 25, 32, 34, 46.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* A social or networking event will offer the chance to explore possibilities and connect with people on the same trail as you. Don't spend too much time standing in the spotlight; you'll learn valuable information if you listen. ✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Test your theories and see what happens. You'll have an extensive appreciation of the possibilities regarding how to turn your thoughts into reality. Stop contemplating what to do next; initiate your plans. Don't give anyone a chance to steal your thunder. ✪✪✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Too much talk and not enough listening will put you at a disadvantage. Gather information, research and do your own thing. It's what you master and present that matters. Don't limit what you can accomplish because you are too busy trying to impress others. ✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Talk to an expert, attend a seminar or have a heart-to-heart discussion with someone close to your life and any changes you face. Look for alternative ways to bring in more money or lower your overhead. Refuse to let frustration or fear hold you back. ✪✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Make your way to the finish line. Don't stop to chat or let distractions hinder your mission. Temptation and acting in haste are the enemies. Look at your objective and put everything you've got into reaching your destination on time and intact. ✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Rethink your personal plans, partnerships and long-term goals. Consider how to make and improve investments, and adjust accordingly. Don't fear being different or changing your direction. Do what's best for your health and well-being. Simplify your routine to maintain happiness and peace of mind. ✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Pay attention to gestures and suggestions. Someone you can relate to will give you inside information about an investment or potential opportunity. Don't be too quick to take the bait. Invest in yourself before you choose to get into a joint venture. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Do your homework, verify information and consider any limitations a change may cause personally or professionally. A good workout will relieve stress and clear your head. Change looks promising, but your options need fine-tuning. ✪✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Don't get stuck doing someone else's dirty work. Listen carefully, ask questions and consider heading in a less complicated direction. Expand your talents, skills and knowledge. You'll discover how to get the most enjoyment out of life. ✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* An unexpected change will free up cash and allow you to take advantage of an opportunity. Don't be a slouch or fall prey to someone's scam. Think and do what's best for you. Invest in something that offers financial stability. ✪✪✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Increase your awareness, listen to experts and protect against tempting offers that sound too good. Stick to your budget and focus on looking and feeling your best by putting in the time to exercise properly. Be good to yourself. ✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* You'll have plenty of unique ideas floating around in your head. Share your thoughts with someone you feel emotionally connected to and see what transpires. An opportunity to discover a better life path looks promising. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are outgoing, practical and revolutionary. You are novel and constant.

✪: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ✪✪: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ✪✪✪: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ✪✪✪✪: Aim high; start new projects. ✪✪✪✪✪: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

	8		5	4	9	1		6
7		9		1		5		3
					3		4	
	6	5		9		7		
	9			3				
4			6	5			1	
9			1	6		2		
6	3	2						
	5				4			7

Difficulty: ★★★ 9/14

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

4	1	3	8	5	2	6	7	9
5	7	8	9	4	6	2	3	1
9	2	6	7	3	1	8	5	4
7	5	1	6	9	3	4	2	8
6	3	2	5	8	4	9	1	7
8	9	4	2	1	7	3	6	5
1	6	9	4	2	5	7	8	3
3	4	7	1	6	8	5	9	2
2	8	5	3	7	9	1	4	6

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

FULL OF SWEETNESS Solution: 7 letters

S	U	O	I	C	A	R	G	E	I	N	W	O	R	B
M	U	S	I	M	A	R	I	T	A	S	T	E	A	O
I	O	N	I	C	E	M	E	R	I	N	G	U	E	U
L	G	U	D	O	N	U	T	E	V	O	L	Y	D	Q
E	A	E	S	A	P	I	E	S	A	L	P	R	R	U
E	N	T	I	S	E	A	M	A	O	E	A	E	G	E
L	M	G	T	K	E	O	M	R	R	C	D	K	E	T
U	A	N	H	E	O	S	N	F	F	N	O	A	N	T
R	E	I	E	T	I	O	U	T	Ⓔ	O	S	B	T	N
B	R	C	H	R	M	M	C	T	I	Ⓚ	N	R	L	A
E	C	I	A	A	E	R	I	M	D	A	Ⓐ	D	E	S
M	E	H	N	O	R	A	C	A	M	E	F	Ⓒ	U	A
E	C	N	I	F	F	U	M	C	H	U	R	R	O	E
R	I	E	T	A	N	O	I	T	C	E	F	F	A	L
C	H	O	C	O	L	A	T	E	N	I	L	A	R	P

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Admire, Affectionate, Bakery, Bouquet, Brownie, Cake, Charisma, Chocolate, Churro, Cinnamon Roll, Cookie, Crème Brulée, Dear, Donut, Fondue, Gentle, Gracious, Heart, Ice Cream, Icing, Latte, Love, Macaron, Meringue, Mousse, Muffin, Nice, Parfait, Perfume, Pies, Pleasant, Praline, Smile, Smoothie, Soda, Sundae, Taste, Tender, Tiramisu

Yesterday's Answer: Official

The NEW **Treasury 54** can be purchased online at www.WonderWordBooks.com, or call 1-800-642-6480. (In Canada, call 1-856-232-2367)

Olson ties team homer mark with 51, Braves beat Phillies 7-6 in 10 innings

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—Matt Olson tied the Braves' season home run record with 51 and Atlanta moved to the cusp of the NL East title, beating the Philadelphia Phillies 7-6 in 10 innings Tuesday night.

Marcell Ozuna hit a three-run shot, Ronald Acuña Jr. had a two-run homer for the Braves. After blowing a 6-1 lead, they won on Eddie Rosario's RBI single off Craig Kimbrel (7-6) that scored the automatic runner.

The Braves can wrap up their sixth straight division crown with a win Wednesday over the Phillies.

Olson is trying to pass Andruw Jones, who hit 51 in 2005.

The NL wild-card leading Phillies tied it on home runs in the ninth for the second straight day but failed to complete the comeback.

Trea Turner tied it at 6 with a leadoff homer —- his 11th in the last 13 games — in the ninth off Braves closer Raisel Iglesias.

Bryce Harper got his 1,500th career hit on his 17th homer of the season in the eighth and Bryson Stott hit a two run-shot in the inning to cut it to 6-5.

Iglesias (5-4) blew ninth-inning leads in consecutive days and picked up two wins. Brand Hand tossed a scoreless 10th for his first save.

AP

Atlanta Braves' Matt Olson, right, and Marcell Ozuna, center, celebrate past Philadelphia Phillies catcher J.T. Realmuto after Olson's home run during the fourth inning of a baseball game, Tuesday, Sept. 12, 2023, in Philadelphia.

YANKEES 3, RED SOX 2, 1ST GAME
YANKEES 4, RED SOX 1, 2ND GAME

BOSTON (AP)—Gleyber Torres keyed the Yankees to their first doubleheader sweep at Fenway Park since 2006, leading New York over Boston twice to get manager Aaron Boone his 500th career win.

Torres had a go-ahead, two-run single in the sixth inning and started a game-ending double play with the bases loaded in the opener of a day-night doubleheader opener. Then in the night game, Torres scored the go-ahead run on a bases-loaded grounder in the sixth and added an RBI single in the ninth.

New York entered 1-8 against the Red Sox this year and had not swept a doubleheader at Fenway since Aug. 18, 2006. The Yankees, who had been fifth in the AL East every day since Aug. 9, matched Boston at 73-72.

Boone improved his managing record to 500-353 in six seasons.

Carlos Rodón (3-5) struck out nine over five innings in the night game, allowing one run and four hits. Zach McAllister, a 35-year-old right-hander, gave up one hit in a scoreless sixth in his first major league appearance since 2018 with Detroit. Matt Bowman, a 32-year-old righty, pitched a one-hit eighth in his first big league outing since 2019 with Cincinnati.

Nick Ramirez finished with a perfect ninth for his first major league save.

DODGERS 11, PADRES 2

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Freddie Freeman homered, doubled and had four hits on his 34th birthday, Will Smith hit a three-run homer and Los Angeles beat San Diego to trim its NL West magic number to five.

Freeman was outstanding on his jersey giveaway night at Dodger Stadium, scoring a season-high four runs in front of thousands wearing his white No. 5 shirt. He singled and scored in the first, hit a two-run homer in the third, singled and scored again in the fourth and got his franchise-record 55th double in the eighth, completing his sixth four-hit game of the season.

Freeman has four homers, 12 RBIs and 12 runs scored in the 14 major league games he has played on his birthday.

CARDINALS 5, ORIOLES 2

BALTIMORE (AP)—Adam Wainwright pitched five solid innings for his 199th win, and St. Louis spoiled John Means' return for Baltimore.

Richie Palacios homered in his first two plate appearances after entering the game as a pinch-runner for an injured Nolan Gorman in the second. It was that kind of night for the Cardinals. Wainwright (4-11) snapped a seven-start losing streak and a run of 11 in a row without a victory. The 42-year-old right-hander, who is retiring after this season, allowed two runs and seven hits.

It was a frustrating loss for the Orioles, who entered with a three-game lead over Tampa Bay atop the AL East, but on this night, the big question for Baltimore was how Means (0-1) would pitch. He was making his first appearance since having Tommy John surgery in April of last year.

BREWERS 3, MARLINS 1

MILWAUKEE (AP)—Josh Donaldson homered for the first time with his new team and Freddy Peralta turned in another stellar outing to help Milwaukee beat Miami.

Milwaukee (81-63) is a season-high 18 games above .500 and reached the mark for the first time since it finished the 2021 season at 95-67.

Donaldson hit a solo home run deep into the second deck in left with one out in the fourth off Edward Cabrera (6-7) to put the Brewers in front 2-1. It was Donaldson's 11th homer of the season and first as a Brewer.

TWINS 3, RAYS 2

MINNEAPOLIS (AP)—Willi Castro hit a two-run home run in the seventh inning and Minnesota rallied to beat Tampa Bay.

Edouard Julien also homered for the Twins, who lost the first two in the three-game series and began the night with a 7 1/2-game lead over Cleveland in the AL Central.

René Pinto homered and Josh Lowe had an RBI single for the Rays, who missed an opportunity to gain ground in the AL East with Baltimore losing to St. Louis. Instead, Tampa Bay remained three games behind the Orioles.

Minnesota was held to two hits through six innings before Max Kepler singled off Rays' starter Zack Littell (3-6) with one out in the seventh. After Carlos Correa struck out, Castro hit a first-pitch slider to the seats in right-centerfield.

METS 7, DIAMOND BACKS 4

NEW YORK (AP)—Ronny Mauricio hit his first major league homer, Pete Alonso launched his 44th of the season and New York beat Arizona.

Francisco Álvarez also went deep and José Butto (1-2) earned his first career win as New York handed the Diamondbacks a costly defeat. Arizona began the day with a 1 1/2-game lead over Miami and San Francisco in a crowded race for the final National League wild card.

New York won hours after David Stearns agreed to become the team's president of baseball operations, according to several reports—filling a spot that's been vacant since Steve Cohen bought the team following the 2020 season.

ATHLETICS 6, ASTROS 2

HOUSTON (AP)—Shea Langeliers and Tony Kemp homered and Oakland jumped on Justin Verlander early in a victory over Houston.

Oakland has won the first two games of this series to avoid its 100th loss this season. Houston's lead in the AL West dwindled to one game with the loss and a win by Texas over Toronto on Tuesday night.

The Astros home woes continued as they fell to 37-37 at Minute Maid Park this season after dropping 12 of their last 16 games there.

RANGERS 6, BLUE JAYS 3

TORONTO (AP)—Robbie Grossman hit a two-run home run, Max Scherzer pitched 5 1/3 shutout innings before leaving because of a right triceps spasm and Texas beat Toronto to leapfrog the Blue Jays in the AL wild-card race.

Corey Seager had three hits, drove in a run and scored twice as the Rangers (80-64) won their fourth straight and wrapped up the season series against Toronto (80-65) with two games remaining. Seager finished 3 for 4 with an intentional walk. Texas came in a half-game behind the Blue Jays.

GUARDIANS 3, GIANTS 1

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—Tyler Freeman hit a go-ahead two-run single in the sixth moments after San Francisco starter Sean Manaea exited with the bases loaded, and Cleveland beat the Giants.

Right-hander Cal Quantrill (3-6), the former Stanford pitcher who sat out a month earlier this season due to inflammation in his pitching shoulder, allowed one run on five hits over six innings to win for the first time in nine starts.

Cleveland closer Emmanuel Clase reached 40 saves for a second straight season, getting a huge catch from center fielder Myles Straw on the wall to steal an extra-base hit from Blake Sabol.

WHITE SOX 6, ROYALS 2, 1ST GAME
ROYALS 11, WHITE SOX 10, 2ND GAME

CHICAGO (AP)—Maikel García hit a tiebreaking single in the seventh inning after Kansas City wasted a nine-run lead, and the Royals hung on to beat Chicago for a doubleheader split.

In the opener, Dylan Cease won consecutive decisions for just the third time and the White Sox ended a strange run of losses when their pitchers struck out 14 or more — Chicago had been 0-11 this year.

Kansas City, a major league-worst 45-101, has lost at least 100 games for the third time in six seasons and with 16 games left could break the team record of 106, set in 2005.

Eloy Jiménez started Chicago's comeback with a fifth-inning homer against Jordan Lyles, and Gavin Sheets hit a three-run double off Taylor Clarke (3-5) in an eight-run sixth, then tied the score 9-9 when he scored on Lenyn Sosa's sacrifice fly.

REDS 6, TIGERS 5, 10 INNINGS

DETROIT (AP)—Tyler Stephenson had an RBI single in the 10th inning in Cincinnati's victory over Detroit.

Stephenson led off the 10th with a single off Tigers closer Alex Lange (6-4), with Noelvi Marte sliding around Jake Rogers' tag at the plate.

Reds All-Star closer Alexis Díaz (9-4) got the victory with a scoreless ninth, and former Tiger Buck Farmer pitched the 10th for his third save.

ROCKIES 6, CUBS 4

DENVER (AP)—Kris Bryant hit a go-ahead homer in the sixth inning and had three RBIs against his former team, helping Colorado beat Chicago.

Elías Díaz had three hits for Colorado, which denied the Cubs a chance to gain ground on Philadelphia in the NL wild card. The Phillies lead Chicago by 1 1/2 games for the first wild card, and the Cubs trail NL Central-leading Milwaukee by four games.

Brenton Doyle had two hits, Jake Bird (3-3) got the win in relief of Chris Flexen, and Justin Lawrence caught Nico Hoerner looking with two on to end the game and get his 11th save for the Rockies.

MARINERS 8, ANGELS 0

SEATTLE (AP)—J.P. Crawford hit a three-run double, Eugenio Suárez homered and had an early RBI single and Seattle scored seven runs with two outs against Los Angeles.

The Mariners snapped a four-game losing streak and took advantage of Houston's loss to last-place Oakland to pull within 1 1/2 games of the AL West-leading Astros. Seattle also tied Toronto for the third and final AL wild card.

Seattle rookie Bryan Woo was terrific, pitching 5 2/3 sharp innings after having his start pushed back as the Mariners try to manage his innings late in the season. Woo (3-4) allowed four hits, struck out eight and didn't walk a batter in 83 pitches.

PIRATES 5, NATIONALS 1

PITTSBURGH (AP)—Josh Palacios hit a two-run homer against his former team, Bailey Falter pitched six efficient innings and Pittsburgh beat Washington.

Palacios gave the Pirates a 2-0 lead in the second with his eighth home run, a 410-foot shot to the bullpen in center. Palacios played 29 games for the Nationals last season, but Pittsburgh picked him up in the December minor league Rule 5 draft.

Rodgers has torn left Achilles tendon and will miss the rest of season

By DENNIS WASZAK Jr.
AP PRO FOOTBALL WRITER

Aaron Rodgers' debut season with the New York Jets is already over. It didn't even last one quarter.

The 39-year-old quarterback has a torn left Achilles tendon that will require season-ending surgery, coach Robert Saleh announced Tuesday. The Jets placed Rodgers on the injured reserve list.

An MRI revealed the severity of the four-time NFL MVP's injury, confirming what the Jets feared after their 22-16 overtime win over Buffalo on Monday night. Saleh said during a video call he was not immediately certain when the quarterback would have surgery.

Torn Achilles tendons typically take several months of recovery due to the extensive rehabilitation needed.

"I feel more for Aaron than anyone," Saleh said. "He's invested so much into this organization, so much into this journey that he's embarked on and wanting to be a part of what we've got going here. And how much he's invested in not only this organization, but his teammates, himself, this fan base, the city, so I have a lot of emotions for him."

AP

New York Jets quarterback Aaron Rodgers (8) is sacked by Buffalo Bills defensive end Leonard Floyd (56) during the first quarter of an NFL football game, Monday, Sept. 11, 2023, in East Rutherford, N.J.

On his fourth regular-season snap in a Jets uniform, Rodgers tried to avoid a rushing Leonard Floyd, who wrapped up the quarterback and spun him down to the MetLife Stadium turf. Rodgers stood up after a few moments, looked over to the Jets' sideline and then sat on the turf—seemingly knowing he was seriously hurt.

He needed help from trainers to get to the sideline, where he was taken to the blue medical tent to be examined. Rodgers then got on a cart to go to the locker room, hopped off near the tunnel and limped inside.

Zach Wilson replaced Rodgers just 3:45 into the game and finished 14 of 21 for 140 yards with a touchdown pass to Garrett Wilson and an interception in the victory.

The third-year quarterback will now start for the Jets on Sunday at Dallas — and the foreseeable future.

Saleh said third-stringer Tim Boyle would be promoted from the practice squad and the Jets would explore their options to find a backup quarterback.

"We are going to look through some things, but I do want to make it very clear: Zach's our quarterback," Saleh said. "We've got a lot of faith in Zach. We're really excited about his opportunity, but we're rolling with Zach and and excited for this and excited for him."

Wilson praised the work Rodgers did with him during the offseason and training camp, helping him feel "a lot more prepared" to take the next step in his development.

"The hardest part is now putting it into a game and I've got to be able to do that," Wilson said Monday night. "Going into this week, it's applying everything that he's kind of helped walk us through and being able to watch him and the coaches, how they've handled this offense. I've got to be able to handle that efficiently."

Rodgers, who spent his first 18 seasons with Green Bay, was acquired by the Jets in April and immediately raised expectations for the frustrated franchise.

He gave the Jets their most accomplished quarterback since Brett Favre, who was acquired from Green Bay in 2008—clearing the way for Rodgers to become the Packers' signal caller.

Rodgers, who repeatedly has said he won't be one-and-done with the Jets, agreed in July to a restructured contract that gives him $75 million in fully guaranteed money over this season and next.

But now, he'll have to focus on a lengthy recovery and rehabilitation process, which could make his playing future uncertain.

Saleh expects Rodgers to continue to remain with the team and help throughout the rest of the season.

"I think I speak for everyone in the organization, we all want him here," Saleh said. "We all want him to be connected, and I think he wants to be here."

The situation evoked eerily similar memories of 1999, when Vinny Testaverde—who, coincidentally, was the Jets' honorary captain Monday night—ruptured his Achilles tendon early in New York's season opener against New England.

Like this year's squad, those Jets had Super Bowl aspirations after going to the AFC championship game the previous season. New York instead finished 8-8 and missed the playoffs.

Rodgers' injury brought up some debate in football circles as to whether the playing surface was a contributing factor. Saleh said he didn't think it was because it wasn't a noncontact injury. MetLife Stadium has been criticized for its turf the last few years because of several noncontact injuries, but the playing surface was replaced before this season.

With Rodgers out for the season, New York will not give up a first-round draft pick to Green Bay next year as part of the trade's terms. It will remain a second-round pick that could have become a first-rounder if Rodgers had played 65% of the Jets' plays this season.

The Packers also received the 13th overall pick, a second-rounder and a sixth-rounder in this year's draft in exchange for Rodgers, the No. 15 overall pick and a fifth-rounder this year.

Plenty of rust to go with the shine in NFL's Week 1

By ROB MAADDI
AP PRO FOOTBALL WRITER

Several NFL teams looked like they needed more preseason work. Some seemed unstoppable.

It's only one game so don't rush to judge.

Most of the NFL's $50 million men had shaky days, though two ended up on the winning side. The Packers, Dolphins, 49ers and Rams were impressive. The Cowboys dominated despite an average offensive performance.

Eight of 14 games Sunday finished under 40 points combined and 12 teams scored fewer than 20. Nine road teams won, including five underdogs.

Joe Burrow, fresh off becoming the highest-paid player in league history, had one of his worst games as a pro. Lamar Jackson and Jalen Hurts, who briefly took turns owning the biggest contract, were rusty in victories. Justin Herbert, who also joined the $50 million club in the offseason, was sharp but couldn't outplay Tua Tagovailoa.

Daniel Jones, the New York Giants' $40 million QB, had a miserable game in a 40-0 loss to Dallas.

Burrow threw for a career-low 82 yards in Cincinnati's 24-3 loss to the Cleveland Browns. Considering he missed most of the preseason with a calf strain and played in steady rain that made it difficult to throw, it's no surprise Burrow was out of sync. Myles Garrett and the Browns' ferocious defense never gave him a chance to get comfortable.

"It's just some Week 1 stuff that happens everywhere," Burrow said about miscommunication with receivers. "You see it across the league. That's something that everybody has to get cleaned up. We have to get it cleaned up and we will."

Hurts and the Eagles played in similar wet conditions in a 25-20 win at New England. Philadelphia's dynamic offense sputtered, totaling just 251 yards. Hurts, the NFL MVP runner-up in 2022, lost a fumble late in the fourth quarter that almost cost the Eagles a win. The offense's only TD drive came after Ezekiel Elliott fumbled at the Patriots 26.

The spotty performance left Eagles coach Nick Sirianni reconsidering his stance on sitting his starters in the preseason.

"I'll definitely reevaluate some of the preseason stuff next year," Sirianni said. "If I had to do it over again right now, I would say, yeah, I would have played starters one or two drives in the preseason."

Jackson was rusty in his first game under new offensive coordinator Todd Monken but the Ravens still defeated the Texans 25-9 in C.J. Stroud's debut. Jackson fumbled twice and threw a pick while also completing 77.3% of his passes.

"I haven't played since November, didn't play preseason, but I feel like it's the first game and things like that may come up—not just with us (but) throughout the league," Jackson said about the rust. "But, we got the win. Just move forward, focus on practicing a little harder on the things we messed up on."

Tagovailoa and the Dolphins, Purdy and the 49ers and Jordan Love and the Packers came out firing. So did Matthew Stafford and the Rams in a surprise 30-13 upset at Seattle.

Tagovailoa threw for 466 yards and three TDs, including a pinpoint 4-yard TD toss to Tyreek Hill for the decisive score in a 36-34 victory in Los Angeles. Hill had 11 catches for 215 yards and two scores.

Purdy, playing his first game since suffering an elbow injury that required surgery only six months ago, picked up where he left off in a brilliant rookie season. He passed for 220 yards and two TDs in San Francisco's 30-7 win at Pittsburgh.

Kenny Pickett and the Steelers proved preseason success doesn't matter. Pickett played five series in the preseason, leading the offense to five TDs. They managed just 239 yards against the 49ers.

The Packers still own the Bears without Aaron Rodgers. Love had three TD passes in Green Bay's 38-20 win at Chicago.

Love and the Packers weren't the only team to have success in the first game without a legendary QB. No Tom Brady was no problem for Tampa Bay. Baker Mayfield played efficiently in a 20-17 win at Minnesota.

The biggest surprise of Week 1 was Stafford and the rebuilding Rams routing the Seahawks, who made the playoffs last season. Stafford threw for 334 yards even without Cooper Kupp on the opposite end of those passes.

Trevor Lawrence and Calvin Ridley had an instant connection in Jacksonville's 31-21 win at Indianapolis. Derek Carr got off to a winning start in New Orleans. Russell Wilson returned to his old self under Sean Payton but Jimmy Garoppolo rallied the Raiders to a 17-16 win at Denver.

Opening week wraps up with Rodgers and the New York Jets hosting Josh Allen and the Buffalo Bills on Monday night.

Based off Sunday's games, there's no telling how this AFC East matchup will play out.

NMI Sr. national hoops program, 3x3 hoops series meeting Saturday

By LEIGH GASES
leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Northern Mariana Islands Basketball Federation will begin its 2023-2024 senior national team program tryouts and selection process with a meeting this Saturday, Sept. 16, at 10am in the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium conference room.

At the same time, a meeting discussing the Marianas 3x3 Basketball Series—whose overall winner will represent the CNMI at the FIBA 3X3 Asia Cup in Singapore, will also be held.

For individuals interested in joining the senior national program and representing the NMI at the Micronesian Games in Marshall Islands in June 2024 will go through a nine-month program consisting of four phases.

The program includes a three-month off-season training from Oct. 2 to Dec. 29 with a main focus on strength and conditioning, and secondary focus on skills.

Phase 2 is open tryouts, which will be held from Jan. 4 to 13, while the selection of the Top 20 men and women players will be held on Jan. 15.

Phase 3 is a two-and-a-half-month pre-season training from Jan. 16 to March 31 focused on team plays along with conditioning and skills, followed by the selection of a 15-player roster team on March 2.

Phase 4 is a three-month on-season training from April 8 to June 14 while the selection of a 12-player roster team will be announced on April 25.

This all wraps up and leads to Phase 5, which is the 10-day 2024 Micronesian Games in Marshall Islands from June 15 to 24, 2024.

LEIGH GASES

The CNMI Senior Women's National Basketball Team poses for a photo at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium. The Northern Mariana Islands Basketball Federation is holding a meeting for their men's and women's senior national program and Marianas 3x3 Basketball Series this Saturday, 10am, at the Ada Gymnasium.

Marianas 3x3 Basketball Series

As for the Marianas 3x3 Basketball Series, it is open to any team whether they want to participate in the FIBA 3x3 Asia Cup or not.

The series will be played at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium, with an open men and open women division.

The series begins on Oct. 26, 27, 28. Each month after that until February will have a weekend tournament. The following are the scheduled dates: Nov. 16, 17, and 18; Dec. 21, 22, and 23; Jan. 18, 19, and 20; and Feb. 15, 16, and 17.

The entrance fee per team is $300. The check must be payable to the Northern Mariana Islands Basketball Federation.

The registration fee/rosters/waiver forms deadline is on Oct. 17, 2023, on a first come, first serve basis and must be paid with all forms.

To be eligible, a player:

❏ Must possess a U.S. passport not expiring within one year from March 2024.

❏ Must not have played for the national team in basketball and/or 3x3 for another country in an official FIBA competition of FIBA.

❏ Must be at least 18 years old by March 1, 2024, and must turn 19 years old or older by the end of 2024.

❏ Must have participated in at least three FIBA 3x3 competitions.

League format:

❏ Maximum of 12 teams for men and eight for women.

❏ Single round robin/two pools (Pool A and Pool B).

❏ Knockout round: Top 4 teams advance from each pool for men and top two teams from each pool for women.

❏ All games will be played under FIBA 3x3 rules and regulations.

❏ All teams will be given points at the end of each month with the following scoring system:

- 1st place = 50 points
- 2nd place = 40 points
- 3rd place = 30 points
- 4th place = 20 points
- All other teams = 10 points

For more information, call (670) 287-3103 or email nmibasketballfederation@gmail.com.

MHS

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though, at first, the Torchbearers led by a few points, then the lead seesawed back to Lady Dolphins territory.

Relucio displayed some trickery at the net with her spikes and was assisted by the setter's accuracy. ACS were propped up at the net most of the time to deny the spikes by the Lady Dolphins, but they managed to find gaps in their defense.

ACS tried to come back with their well-placed serves and long rallies, but MHS made a few great digs and saves that earned them some points.

While the first set was a nail-biter until the end, the second set was a much easier one for MHS as they rode the wave for the second time. They regrouped and were more anticipatory of ACS' comebacks and serves—and with their teamwork and communication, took the set and the win by 6 points.

In the first game of the season, MHS II defeated Saipan International School also in two sets, 21-14, 21-15. MHS III then defeated Saipan Southern High School, 21-13, 21-17.

In other results, Kagman High School II bested ACS II, 21-14, 21–19; SSHS lost against SIS, 19-22, 22-24, and defending champions Grace Christian Academy got a run for their money after they won in three tough sets against KHS, 21-10, 19-21, 15-9.

LEIGH GASES

A Kagman High School II player bumps a return during their game against Agape Christian School II in the first day of the NMIVA-PSS Interscholastic Girls High School Volleyball League 2023-2024 Tuesday night at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

JTM

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starting five. It was a blowout of 10-0 until finally IT&E's Brian Natividad broke through with a jumper from 3-point land. His back-to-back 3-pointers got them out of the single digit mark, but the majority of their attempts were a hit and miss, which allowed JTM to lead, 26-13.

The second quarter wasn't any better for IT&E as they were still trying to explore the world of JTM's speedsters and tight defense. Although, IT&E managed to maneuver better and bridged the gap a little closer, 44-61.

But JTM didn't let up as Rodel Pastrana led them with 25 points. Carl Aldan contributed 16, while Elmer Esdrelon had 15 markers.

It was a closer battle in the fourth quarter as IT&E's Rodjay Macaraig and Natividad tag-teamed and made rapid-fire shots to catch up with JTM in the last minutes. However, Pastrana was faster and made sure all his attempts sunk in—plus a foul on Kenneth Rodriguez and Vinz Rodriguez's field goal ensured their win by just 5 points.

The on-and-off rainy weather over the past week has postponed many of the league's games. Tuesday was the first night they were able to play two games.

The second game that night was The Game-Eats Easy's blowout win over Priority Care, 100-76. Last Monday, Vik Team won against 670 Rollers, 99-84.

As of Sept. 12, the team standings in the open division Pool A are: Solid North 4-1; Easy Riders 3-0; Loving Hands 2-1; The Game 3-1; Priority Care 2-3; Winners Group 1-3; Socho 1-4; and Home Smart 0-3.

In the open division Pool B, Checkpoint is at 4-0; CK Saints 3-0; Vik Team 3-3; Choju 2-2; Bridge Capital 1-3; 670 Rollers 1-5, and IT&E 0-4.

Blue Haus still leads the masters division in wins with a 3-1 record; A Plus Team 2-0; JSN 2-0; Vizion 1-1; Legends 1-1; Lakay 1-1; Win Pacific 0-3; and Long Shot 0-3.

JTM 87 – Pastrana 25, Aldan 16, Esdrelon 15, Moises 10, Jonathan Broncano 6, Cirera 6, K. Rodriguez 5, V. Rodriguez 2, Jose Broncano 2.

IT&E 82 – Giron 21, Brian Natividad 18, Jose 10, Divinagracia 10, Macaraig 9, Billy Natividad 9, Tapay 5.

Scoring by quarters: 26-13, 56-44, 75-71, 87-82.

IT'S

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There are going to be ups and downs—but it's what you do, when things are down that defines you. Do you just give up? Or do you find another way of getting there? There are always going to be challenges—it's just what you do when a challenge happens."

The retired WNBA player said that being a motivational speaker for the students was "truly amazing."

She said it was nice talking about her life experiences and hardships that she overcame in hopes of positively impacting the students, but she said what touched her the most was when she received letters from some students thanking her.

La Fleur shared that one of the letters from a male student said, "Thank you, you're my role model now. It's great to hear from somebody that didn't have much, being able to achieve things. I hope you have a good time here on Saipan. And P.S., if you're looking for a fishing spot, go to Smiling Cove."

La Fleur, who loves fishing back home in Australia, said that the thank you letter was truly special not only for the tip, but also because the students didn't have to do that, but they did anyway.

The FIBA Oceania National Federation and Sport Development manager said it actually made her think about the people in her life that have given her an opportunity and mentored her. "I reached out to one of them after that and I said 'thank you for believing in me.' I think it's important that you think about who has impacted you and tell them. We don't often tell people how much they mean to us and what they've done for us," said La Fleur.

Destiny Pangelinan, a Marianas High School senior and member of the CNMI U17 basketball team, was at the La Fleur's event and said that she had a lot of great advice.

"For someone who has so much experience in the basketball world, playing in the WNBA and playing against a lot of stars that we look up to here, it was really nice to hear her game experiences and the challenges that she faced throughout her journey," said Pangelinan.

Olson ties team homer mark with 51, Braves beat Phillies 7-6 in 10 innings.

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Sports

NMI Sr. national hoops program, 3x3 hoops series meeting Saturday.

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MHS teams bag wins in girls v-ball start

LEIGH GASES
Marianas High School's Airianna Estrada, right, spikes over two Agape Christian School defenders during their varsity game win in the return of the NMIVA-PSS Interscholastic Girls High School Volleyball League 2023-2024 Tuesday at the MHS Gymnasium.

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

The Marianas High School Lady Dolphins' three volleyball teams are off to a roaring start as they won each of their games in the NMIVA-PSS Interscholastic Girls High School Volleyball League 2023-2024.

The MHS Gymnasium was fully packed with spectators as they welcomed the return of the PSS volleyball season. The home MHS varsity team was cheered on by their classmates and supporters as their rotation composed of Julie Ann Capayas, Deivalyn Ham, Direnalyn Castro, Myah Omelau, Airianna Estrada, Elaina Manglona, Sheira Dela Rosa, Cassie Regan, Ayanna Stole, Tamia Hix, and Rizza Relucio defeated Agape Christian School in two sets, 21-19, 21-15.

It was a close battle from the opening serve as both teams were still trying to get their bearings. Things heated up quickly

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'It's not going to be easy'

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

Annie La Fleur is the epitome of someone who started from the bottom and climbed her way to the top—and although she is back home in Australia, she has set some lasting impact on the people she has had the opportunity of meeting during her more than one week stay in the CNMI.

Along with her busy schedule of coaches and referee workshops and basketball clinics, the former basketball Olympian found time to meet and greet over 200 of Saipan's high school students at Marianas High School and Saipan Southern High School as a guest motivational speaker.

What she wanted the students to take away from her life experiences was that, "It's not going to be easy…

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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Marianas High School students take a group photo after they welcomed retired WNBA player and Olympic basketball medalist Annie La Fleur as their motivational speaker last week.

JTM wins two in a row

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

Even the seemingly never-ending rainy weather was not enough to put a damper on the red-hot JTM as they won two games in a row in the Inaugural SMEC-SMLEG Invitational Basketball Tournament 2023 at the Gualo Rai Basketball Court.

JTM's recent conquest was IT&E, 87-82, last Tuesday night and before that, they defeated 670 Rollers last Wednesday, 76-60. These wins handed JTM their third and fourth wins of the season with just one loss.

JTM led the first quarter mightily, with a hefty sum of points made by their

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LEIGH GASES
JTM's Carl Aldan goes for a fadeaway jumper at the net during their game against IT&E in the Inaugural SMEC-SMLEG Invitational Basketball Tournament 2023 at the Gualo Rai Basketball Court Tuesday night.